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THE WORKS

OF

PROFESSOR WILSON

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

EDITED BY HIS SON-IN-LAW

PROFESSOR FERRIER

VOL. I.

NOCTES AMBROSIANÆ

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
MDCCCLV

NOCTES

AMBROSIANÆ

BY

PROFESSOR WILSON

IN FOUR VOLUMES

VOL. I.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
MDCCCLV

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ΧΡΗ Δ'ΕΝ ΣΥΜΠΟΣΙΩ ΚΥΛΙΚΩΝ ΠΕΡΙΝΙΣΣΟΜΕΝΑΩΝ
ΗΔΕΑ ΚΩΤΙΛΛΟΝΤΑ ΚΑΘΗΜΕΝΟΝ ΟΙΝΟΠΟΤΑΖΕΙΝ.

PHOC. *ap. Ath.*

[*This is a distich by wise old Phocylides,*
An ancient who wrote crabbed Greek in no silly days;
Meaning, "'Tis RIGHT FOR GOOD WINE-BIBBING PEOPLE,
NOT TO LET THE JUG PACE ROUND THE BOARD LIKE A CRIPPLE;
BUT GAILY TO CHAT WHILE DISCUSSING THEIR TIPPLE."
An excellent rule of the hearty old cock 'tis—
And a very fit motto to put to our Noctes.]

C. N. *ap. Ambr.*

PREFACE.

Among the various writings of Professor Wilson, the series of imaginary colloquies entitled "Noctes Ambrosianæ" appears to stand pre-eminent; and accordingly it has been resolved that these celebrated Dialogues shall take the lead in this edition of his collected works.

The Noctes Ambrosianæ were contributed to *Blackwood's Magazine* between the years 1822 and 1835. To many persons it may be a matter of surprise why these articles—the popularity of which, when they originally appeared, was unprecedented in the annals of periodical literature—should never have been reprinted in this country until now. In explanation of this postponement, it is sufficient to say that the Noctes Ambrosianæ were the emanations of a great genius, to whom the work of creation was ever more congenial than the task of selection and revision. It was certainly Professor Wilson's intention to have published a corrected edition of these Dialogues. But so long as the fountain of his daily thoughts was a spring fraught with inexhaustible resources, and running over with perpetually new imaginations, this project was indefinitely procrastinated; and at the time of his death no preparation had been made for carrying the contemplated work into execution.

In these circumstances, the Messrs Blackwood, to whom the copyright of the Noctes belongs, did me the honour of proposing that I should edit the work,—an undertaking for which my sole special qualifications are these: that, owing to my relationship to Professor Wilson, I enjoyed his intimacy, not only in his latter years, but during that fervent and prolific period of his life, when, month after month, he electrified the world with the flashes of those glorious "nights;" that I was also personally acquainted with the other *dramatis personæ;* and that, having, in general, a distinct recollection of the various incidents, public and private, alluded to in their ideal confabulations, I am tolerably competent to supply such explanations as may be needed.

It is much to be lamented that this work was not undertaken by Professor Wilson himself, and executed during his lifetime. The greatest pains, however, have been taken to repair the effects of this procrastination, in so far as they are remediable, and to send forth the Noctes Ambrosianæ to the world in the form deemed most in accordance with the mind of their Author, and best calculated to suit the taste of the public. The original series has been carefully revised and sifted. All the contributions to it (songs and quotations being, of course, excepted), which were not written by the Professor, have been excluded from republication, and several of the Dialogues which were his only in part, have been omitted. By means of these retrenchments, it is believed that the Text of the work has been settled as correctly and as conclusively as it was possible for it to be in the circumstances. A few remarks may be offered in explanation of the principles which have guided me.

Many of the Noctes Ambrosianæ were not written by Professor Wilson. It is obvious, therefore, that these could not, with any propriety, appear in what professes to be a

collected edition of *his* works. Had these Dialogues stood in any kind of harmonious relationship to the others, some inconvenience might have been occasioned by their exclusion. But all cause of regret is removed by the consideration that, whatever the merit of the omitted colloquies may be — and it is sometimes considerable—they are so totally different in tone, spirit, style, topics, sentiment, and character—in short, in their whole treatment of men and things—from the Noctes Ambrosianæ of Professor Wilson, that they could not have been introduced into the collection without destroying entirely that unity of design and dramatic consistency of execution for which the series, in so far as it proceeded from his hand, is in the highest degree remarkable.

Others of these Dialogues are Professor Wilson's only in part. In dealing with these, the course which I have followed is this: In cases where his share could be accurately ascertained, and detached in an intelligible and presentable form from the matter supplied by his associates, I have printed it in this collection: in cases, again, where his contributions were so mixed up with those of other writers that they either could not be exactly determined, or, if determined, could not be separated from the context without losing their significance—in such cases I have omitted the Dialogue altogether.

With regard to the special information which has enabled me to make these retrenchments, and thus, as I conceive, to authenticate the text, that has been derived from my own personal knowledge of the circumstances in which many of the Dialogues were written, from my occasional conversations with Professor Wilson respecting them, from their own internal evidence, and from the registers of the Messrs Blackwood. It is unnecessary to specify in detail what portions of the series have been omitted. This, however, may be stated, that, although Professor Wilson's style may

be traced to a considerable extent in some of the earlier pieces, the series is fixed by this Edition as properly commencing at the nineteenth number, which now ranks as number one. The initiatory dialogues are occupied for the most part with matters of comparatively local and temporary interest; and their general character, both in point of style and in point of thought, is scarcely such as to entitle them to claim that attention, and aspire to that perpetuity, which may be reasonably expected for their maturer associates. Although, therefore, they are to some extent the composition of Professor Wilson, their omission, it is believed, will not be regretted. At the number specified the series properly commences, as then bearing, in broad and unmistakable characters, the sole impress of his fervent and masculine genius. Here it was that the author began to feel his strength, to get into the right vein, and to put forth all his powers. At this point the work begins to rise, and the workman becomes the undisputed master of his instruments. From this period the Dialogues which are his are sustained to the end with a dramatic propriety,—with a force and variety of thought,—with a fervour of feeling,—with an exuberance of humour,—with an affluence of poetical imagery, and with a freedom and elasticity of language which are certainly unparalleled in the species of composition to which they belong. This continuity of excellence would have been impaired,—this broad and intermingled flow of majesty and mirth would have been obstructed,—this unity of creation would have been violated,—this wilderness of rejoicing fancies would have been profaned by the introduction of the other Dialogues, which, whatever their intrinsic merits may be, would have been altogether out of place in such companionship. The harmony of the whole would have been disturbed even by the insertion of those pieces in which Professor Wilson's touch is only occasionally apparent. He

never worked his best when he worked in union with another. It is only when he rushes on alone and single-handed that he prevails. If, therefore, any farther apology for the nature of my intromissions be required, it may be found in the consideration that, having undertaken this editorial office, I had a sacred duty to perform to the memory of the deceased; and I feel assured that the course which I have adopted is that by which his reputation has been best consulted, and such as he would have approved of had he been alive.

The original series, as it stands in *Blackwood's Magazine*, consisted of seventy-one numbers; but by this process of retrenchment thirty of these have been excluded from the list, thus leaving forty-one numbers to be republished as the authentic compositions of Professor Wilson; and these forty-one Dialogues are now given forth, not in the character of a selection,—which is always an objectionable and unsatisfactory species of publication,—but as constituting the work to which the title "NOCTES AMBROSIANÆ" properly appertains.

In America the popularity of the Noctes Ambrosianæ has been proved by the extent to which they have been republished and circulated in that country,—and this notwithstanding the drawbacks and disadvantages under which they have hitherto laboured. In that country an edition was published a good many years ago, and another more recently by Dr Shelton Mackenzie, which, in spite of some slips, and a good many oversights—(mostly to be explained on the ground that it was impossible for him to be in possession of the requisite information)—is, on the whole, creditable to the industry and good sense of that gentleman. But both of these editions are encumbered with that *plethora* of alien matter which is cleared off in the present impression; and no attempt has been made in either of them to distinguish

the compositions of Professor Wilson from the occasional workmanship of his associates.

A few remarks have now to be made in reference to the Locality where the scene of these imaginary colloquies is laid, and of the Characters who take part in them. The locality—or at least the event for which, next to its association with the Noctes Ambrosianæ the locality is most memorable—has been so forcibly depicted by Mr Lockhart, that although the quotation is somewhat long, I cannot do better than present it to the reader in full :—

"The street or lane," says Mr Lockhart,[1] "in which *Ambrose's Tavern* is situated, derives its name of Gabriel's Road from a horrible murder which was committed there a great number of years ago. Any occurrence of that sort seems to make a prodigiously lasting impression on the minds of the Scotch people. You remember *Muschat's Cairn* in the *Heart of Mid-Lothian*. I think *Gabriel's Road* is a more shocking name. *Cairn* is too fine a word to be coupled with the idea of a vulgar murder. But they both sound horribly enough. The story of Gabriel, however, is one that ought to be remembered, for it is one of the most striking illustrations I have ever met with of the effects of Puritanical superstition in destroying the moral feelings, when carried to the extreme, in former days not uncommon in Scotland. Gabriel was a preacher or licentiate of the Kirk, employed as domestic tutor in a gentleman's family in Edinburgh, where he had for pupils two fine boys of eight or ten years of age. The tutor entertained, it seems, some partiality for the abigail of the children's mother; and it so happened that one of his pupils observed him kiss the girl one day in passing through an ante-room where she was sitting. The little fellow carried this interesting piece of intelligence to his brother, and both of them mentioned it by way of a good joke to their mother the same evening. Whether the lady had dropped some hint of what she had heard to her maid, or whether she had done so to the preacher himself, I have not learned; but so it was that he found he had been discovered, and by what means also. The idea of having been detected in such a trivial trespass was enough to poison for ever the spirit of this juvenile Presbyterian. His whole soul became filled with the blackest demons of rage, and he resolved to sacrifice to his indignation the instruments of what he conceived to

[1] See *Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk*, 1819, vol. ii. p. 197.

be so deadly a disgrace. It was Sunday; and after going to church as usual with his pupils, he led them out to the country—for the ground on which the New Town of Edinburgh now stands was then considered as *the country* by the people of Edinburgh. After passing calmly, to all appearance, through several of the green fields, which have now become streets and squares, he came to a place more lonely than the rest, and there, drawing a large clasp-knife from his pocket, he at once stabbed the elder of his pupils to the heart. The younger boy gazed on him for a moment, and then fled with shrieks of terror; but the murderer pursued with the bloody knife in his hand, and slew him also as soon as he was overtaken. The whole of this shocking scene was observed distinctly from the Old Town by innumerable crowds of people, who were near enough to see every motion of the murderer, and hear the cries of his victims, although the deep ravine[1] between them and the place of blood was far more than sufficient to prevent the possibility of rescue. The tutor sat down upon the spot immediately after having concluded his butchery, as if in a stupor of despair and madness, and was only roused to his recollection by the touch of the hands that seized him.

"It so happened that the magistrates of the city were assembled together in their council-room, waiting till it should be time for them to walk to church in procession (as is their custom), when the crowd drew near with their captive. The horror of the multitude was communicated to them, along with their intelligence, and they ordered the wretch to be brought into their presence. It is an old law in Scotland that when a murderer is caught in the very act of guilt (or as they call it, *red-hand*), he may be immediately executed without any formality or delay. Never, surely, could a more fitting occasion be found for carrying this old law into effect. Gabriel was hanged within an hour after the deed was done, the red knife being suspended from his neck, and the blood of the innocents scarce dry upon his fingers. Such," concludes Mr Lockhart, "is the terrible story from which the name of Gabriel's Road is derived."

This locality, which still bears the name by which in ancient times it was so bloodily baptised, is situated in the vicinity of West Register Street, at the back of the east end of Princes Street, and close to the Register Office. Here stood the tavern from which the *Noctes Cœnæque*, commemorated in these volumes, derived their name.

[1] Through which the Railway now runs in a natural channel, which could not have answered its purpose better had it been artificially constructed.

"A *cursed* spot, 'tis said, in days of yore ;
But *nothing* ails it now—the place is *merry!*"

But a too literal interpretation is not to be given to the scene of these festivities. Ambrose's Hotel was indeed "a local habitation and a name," and many were the meetings which Professor Wilson and his friends had within its walls. But the *true* Ambrose's must be looked for only in the realms of the imagination — the veritable scene of the "Ambrosian nights" existed nowhere but in their Author's brain, and their flashing fire was struck out in solitude by genius wholly independent of the stimulus of companionship.

The same remark applies to the principal characters who take part in these dialogues. Although founded to some extent on the actual, they are in the highest degree idealised. Christopher North was Professor Wilson himself, and here, therefore, the real and the ideal may be viewed as coincident. But Timothy Tickler is a personage whose lineaments bear a resemblance to those of their original only in a few fine although unmistakable outlines, while James Hogg in the flesh was but a faint adumbration of the inspired Shepherd of the Noctes.

Mr Robert Sym (the prototype of Timothy Tickler) was born in 1750, and died in 1844 at the age of ninety-four, having retained to the last the full possession of his faculties, and enjoyed uninterrupted good health to within a very few years of his decease. He followed the profession of Writer to the Signet from 1775 until the close of that century, when he retired from business on a competent fortune. He was uncle to Professor Wilson by the mother's side, and his senior by some five-and-thirty years. He thus belonged to a former generation, and had passed his grand climacteric long before the establishment of *Blackwood's Magazine*, with which he had no connection whatever beyond taking

an interest in its success. And although his conviviality flowed down upon a later stock, and was never more heartily called forth than when in the company of his nephew, these circumstances must of themselves have prevented the Author of the Noctes from trenching too closely on reality in his effigiation of Timothy Tickler.

Mr Sym's portrait in the character of Timothy Tickler is sketched more than once in the course of the Noctes Ambrosianæ. But the following description of him by the Ettrick Shepherd is so graphic, and for the most part so true, that I cannot resist the pleasure of transcribing it :—

"I had never heard," says Hogg in his *Reminiscences of Former Days*,[1] "more than merely his (Mr Sym's) name, and imagined him to be some very little man about Leith. Judge of my astonishment when I was admitted by a triple-bolted door into a grand house[2] in George's Square, and introduced to its lord, an uncommonly fine-looking elderly gentleman, about seven feet high, and as straight as an arrow! His hair was whitish, his complexion had the freshness and ruddiness of youth, his looks and address full of kindness and benevolence; but whenever he stood straight up (for he always had to stoop about half-way when speaking to a common-sized man like me), then you could not help perceiving a little of the haughty air of the determined and independent old aristocrat.

"From this time forward, during my stay in Edinburgh, Mr Sym's hospitable mansion was the great evening resort of his three nephews[3] and me; sometimes there were a few friends beside, of whom Lockhart and Samuel Anderson[4] were mostly two, but we four for certain; and there are no jovial evenings of my bypast life which I reflect on with greater delight than those. Tickler is completely an original, as any man may see who has attended to his remarks; for there is no sophistry there,—they are every one his own. Nay, I don't believe that North has, would, or durst, put a single sentence into his mouth that had not proceeded out of it.[5] No, no; although

[1] Prefixed to *Altrive Tales*, by the Ettrick Shepherd. London, 1832.

[2] This is a slight exaggeration. Mr Sym's house, though sufficiently commodious, was a bachelor domicile of very moderate dimensions.

[3] Professor Wilson, Mr Robert Sym Wilson, Manager of the Royal Bank of Scotland, and Mr James Wilson, the eminent naturalist.

[4] Samuel Anderson makes his appearance in Noctes Ambrosianæ, May 1834.

[5] This observation is very wide of the mark. Assuredly Mr Sym was no consenting party to the slight liberties which were taken with him in the Noctes,

I was made a scape-goat, no one, and far less a nephew, might do so with Timothy Tickler. His reading, both ancient and modern, is boundless,[1] his taste and perception acute beyond those of most other men; his satire keen and biting, but at the same time his good-humour is altogether inexhaustible, save when ignited by coming in collision with Whig or Radical principles. Still, there being no danger of that with me, he and I never differed in one single sentiment in our lives, excepting as to the comparative merits of some strathspey reels.

"But the pleasantest part of our fellowship is yet to describe. At a certain period of the night our entertainer knew, by the longing looks which I cast to a beloved corner of the dining-room, what was wanting. Then, with 'Oh, I beg your pardon, Hogg, I was forgetting,' he would take out a small gold key that hung by a chain of the same precious metal from a particular button-hole, and stalk away as tall as the life, open two splendid fiddle-cases, and produce their contents; first the one, and then the other, but always keeping the best to himself. I'll never forget with what elated dignity he stood straight up in the middle of that floor and rosined his bow; there was a twist of the lip and an upward beam of the eye that were truly sublime. Then down we sat side by side, and began—at first gently, and with easy motion, like skilful grooms keeping ourselves up for the final heat, which was slowly but surely approaching. At the end of every tune we took a glass, and still our enthusiastic admiration of the Scottish tunes increased—our energies of execution redoubled, till ultimately it became not only a complete and well-contested race, but a trial of strength, to determine which should drown the other. The only feelings short of ecstasy which came across us in these enraptured moments were caused by hearing the laugh and the joke going on with our friends, as if no such thrilling strains had been flowing. But if Sym's eye chanced at all to fall on them, it instantly retreated upwards again in mild indig-

and it is not to be supposed that he had more than a faint suspicion of his resemblance to the redoubted Timothy. What Hogg says in regard to the vigour of Mr Sym's talents, and the originality and pointedness of his remarks, is quite true; but had the nephew ventured to report any of the conversations of the uncle, there cannot be a doubt that the "breach of privilege" would have been highly resented by the latter. But the Professor had too much tact for that. He took good care not to sail too near the wind; and the utmost that can be said is, that the language and sentiments of Mr Sym bore some general resemblance, and supplied a sort of groundwork to the conversational characteristics of Mr Tickler.

[1] This also is incorrect. Mr Sym's reading, although accurate and intelligent so far as it went, was by no means unbounded. It was limited to our best British classics, and of these his special favourites were Hume and Swift.

nation. To his honour be it mentioned, he has left me a legacy of that inestimable violin, provided that I outlive him.[1] But not for a thousand such would I part with my old friend."

To this description I may be just permitted to add, that in the more serious concerns of life Mr Sym's character and career were exemplary. To the highest sense of honour, and the most scrupulous integrity in his professional dealings, he united the manners of a courtier of the ancient *regime*, and a kindliness of nature which endeared him to the old and to the young, with the latter of whom, in particular, he was always an especial favourite.

But the animating spirit of the Noctes Ambrosianæ is the Ettrick Shepherd himself. James Hogg was born in 1772, in a cottage on the banks of the Ettrick, a tributary of the Tweed; and died at Altrive, near St Mary's Loch—a lake in the same district—in 1835. His early years were spent in the humblest pastoral avocations, and he scarcely received even the rudiments of the most ordinary education. For long "chill penury repressed his noble rage;" but the poetical instinct was strong within him, and the flame ultimately broke forth under the promptings of his own ambition, and the kind encouragement of Sir Walter Scott. After a few hits and many misses in various departments of literature, he succeeded in striking the right chord in the *Queen's Wake*, which was published in 1813. This work stamped Hogg as, after Burns (*proximus, sed longo intervallo*), the greatest poet that had ever sprung from the bosom of the common people. It became at once, and deservedly, popular; and by this poem, together with some admirable songs, imbued with genuine feeling, and the national spirit of his country, he has a good chance of being known favour-

[1] Hogg did not outlive him. The story of the bequest of the cremona is of course apocryphal. But see Noctes I., p. 12.

ably to posterity. But his surest passport to immortality is his embalmment in the Noctes Ambrosianæ.

In connection with this brief notice of James Hogg, I may take the opportunity of clearing up a point of literary history which has been enveloped in obscurity until now: I allude to the authorship of a composition which is frequently referred to in the Noctes Ambrosianæ, the celebrated Chaldee MS. This trenchant satire on men and things in the metropolis of Scotland, was published in the seventh number of *Blackwood's Magazine.* It excited the most indescribable commotion at the time—so much noise, indeed, that never since has it been permitted to make any noise whatever, this promising babe having been pitilessly suppressed almost in its cradle, in consequence of threatened legal proceedings. A set of the Magazine containing it is now rarely to be met with. The authorship of this composition has been always a subject of doubt. Hogg used to claim the credit of having written it. I have recently ascertained that to him the original conception of the Chaldee MS. is due; and also that he was the author of the first thirty-seven verses of Chap. I., and of one or two sentences besides. So that, out of the one hundred and eighty verses of which the whole piece consists, about forty are to be attributed to the Shepherd. Hogg, indeed, *wrote* and sent to Mr Blackwood much more of the Chaldee MS. than the forty verses aforesaid; but not more than these were inserted in the magazine; the rest of the production being the workmanship of Wilson and Lockhart. Such is a true and authentic account of the origin and authorship of the Chaldee MS. There can be little doubt that when this clever *jeu d'esprit* is republished with annotations (and it may form a very suitable appendix to the Noctes Ambrosianæ), the present generation will be as much amused by its pleasantry, and by the singular state of feeling, literary and political, which it reveals, as our fathers

were astounded by its audacity, and frightened from their propriety by its personalities. To return to the Shepherd.

There was a homely heartiness of manner about Hogg, and a Doric simplicity in his address, which were exceedingly prepossessing. He sometimes carried a little too far the privileges of an innocent rusticity, as Mr Lockhart has not failed to note in his Life of Scott; but, in general, his slight deviations from etiquette were rather amusing than otherwise. When we consider the disadvantages with which he had to contend, it must be admitted that Hogg was, in all respects, a very remarkable man. In his social hours, a *naïveté*, and a vanity which disarmed displeasure by the openness and good-humour with which it was avowed, played over the surface of a nature which at bottom was sufficiently shrewd and sagacious; but his conversational powers were by no means pre-eminent. He never, indeed, attempted any colloquial display, although there was sometimes a quaintness in his remarks, a glimmering of drollery, a rural freshness, and a tinge of poetical colouring, which redeemed his discourse from commonplace, and supplied to the consummate artist who took him in hand the hints out of which to construct a character at once original, extraordinary, and delightful—a character of which James Hogg undoubtedly furnished the germ, but which, as it expanded under the hands of its artificer, acquired a breadth, a firmness, and a power to which the bard of Mount Benger had certainly no pretension.

The Ettrick Shepherd of the Noctes Ambrosianæ is one of the finest and most finished creations which dramatic genius ever called into existence. Out of very slender materials, an ideal infinitely greater, and more real, and more original than the prototype from which it was drawn, has been bodied forth. Bearing in mind that these dialogues are conversations on men and manners, life and literature,

we may confidently affirm that nowhere within the compass of that species of composition is there to be found a character at all comparable to this one in richness and readiness of resource. In wisdom the Shepherd equals the Socrates of Plato; in humour he surpasses the Falstaff of Shakespeare. Clear and prompt, he might have stood up against Dr Johnson in close and peremptory argument; fertile and copious, he might have rivalled Burke in amplitude of declamation; while his opulent imagination and powers of comical description invest all that he utters either with a picturesque vividness, or a graphic quaintness peculiarly his own. Be the theme what it may, tragical or comical, solemn or satirical, playful or pathetic, high or low, he is always equal to the occasion. In his most grotesque delineations, his good sense never deserts him; in his most festive abandonment his morality is never at fault. He is intensely individual, and also essentially national. Hence he is real—hence he is universal. His sentiments are broad and catholic, because, careless whom he may conciliate or whom he may offend, he pours them forth without restraint—the irrepressible effusions of a strong humorous soul, which sees only with its own eyes, and feels only with its own heart. Whether he is describing "Fozie Tam,"[1] as seen through all the glittering paraphernalia of a prancing and terrible dragoon, or painting "the mutineer's execution"[2] in colours to which the highest art of the professed tragedian could add neither pity nor terror, he is always the same inimitable original—the same self-consistent Shepherd, ever buoyant amid the shifting eddies of the discourse—ever ready to hunt down a humbug, or to shower the spray of an inexhaustible fancy over the realities of life, until their truthfulness becomes more evidently true. His periods have all the ease and idiom of living speech,

[1] See Noctes VII., p. 165. [2] See Noctes XII., p. 303.

as distinguished from the stiffness of what may be termed spoken language, and this to an extent which is not always to be met with even in dramatic compositions of the highest order.

In another respect, the dialect of the Shepherd is peculiar; it is thoroughly Scottish, and it could not be Anglicised without losing its raciness and spoiling entirely the dramatic propriety of his character. Let it not be supposed, however, that it is in any degree *provincial*, or that it is a departure from English speech in the sense in which the dialects of Cockneydom and of certain English counties are violations of the language of England. Although now nearly obsolete, it ranks as a sister-tongue to that of England. It is a dialect consecrated by the genius of Burns, and by the usage of Scott; and now confirmed as classical by its last, and in some respects its greatest, master. This dialect was Burns's natural tongue; it was one of Sir Walter's most effective instruments; but the author of the Noctes Ambrosianæ wields it with a copiousness, flexibility, and splendour which never have been, and probably never will be, equalled. As the last specimen, then, on a large scale of the national language of Scotland which the world is ever likely to see, I have preserved with scrupulous care the original orthography of these compositions. Glossarial interpretations, however, have been generally subjoined for the sake of those readers who labour under the disadvantage of having been born on the south side of the Tweed.

These remarks may, perhaps, be a sufficient prologue to the varied entertainments which follow. They may serve to introduce to the reader the *dramatis personæ* of the Noctes Ambrosianæ; they may enable him to form some conception of their distinctive peculiarities, and to understand to what extent they were real, and to what extent they are ideal characters. Such other points as have appeared to me to

require elucidation in order to a full comprehension of these Dialogues, are cleared up in short notes to the best of my information and ability. But I must be permitted once more to express my deep regret that it should have been the fate of the Noctes Ambrosianæ to go forth into the world in a collected form under other auspices than those of their illustrious author, and without having had the benefit of his notes and emendations.

J. F. F.

West Park, St Andrews,
July 18, 1855.

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NOCTES AMBROSIANÆ.

I.

(MARCH 1825.)

ΧΡΗ Δ'ΕΝ ΣΥΜΠΟΣΙΩ ΚΥΛΙΚΩΝ ΠΕΡΙΝΙΣΣΟΜΕΝΑΩΝ
ΗΔΕΑ ΚΩΤΙΛΛΟΝΤΑ ΚΑΘΗΜΕΝΟΝ ΟΙΝΟΠΟΤΑΖΕΙΝ.

PHOC. *ap. Ath.*

[*This is a distich by wise old Phocylides,*
An ancient who wrote crabbed Greek in no silly days;
Meaning, "'TIS RIGHT FOR GOOD WINE-BIBBING PEOPLE,
NOT TO LET THE JUG PACE ROUND THE BOARD LIKE A CRIPPLE;
BUT GAILY TO CHAT WHILE DISCUSSING THEIR TIPPLE."
An excellent rule of the hearty old cock 'tis—
And a very fit motto to put to our Noctes.]

C. N. *ap. Ambr.*

Blue Parlour. Midnight. Watchman heard crying "One o'clock."

NORTH. TICKLER. THE ETTRICK SHEPHERD.
The middle Term asleep.

North. The old gentleman is fairly dished. Pray, are you a great dreamer, James? Your poetry is so very imaginative that I should opine your sleep to be haunted by many visions, dismal and delightful.

Shepherd. I never dream between the blankets. To me sleep has no separate world. It is as a transient mental annihilation. I snore, but dream not. What is the use of sleep at all, if you are to toss and tumble, sigh and groan, shudder and shriek, and agonise in the convulsions of night mayoralty? I lie all night like a stone, and in the morning

up I go, like a dewy leaf before the zephyr's breath, glittering in the sunshine.

North. Whence are all your poetic visions, James, of Kilmeny, and Hynde, and the Chaldee Manuscript?

Shepherd. Genius,—Genius, my dear sir. May not a man dream, when he is awake, better dreams than when sleep dulls and deadens both cerebrum and cerebellum? O, happy days that I have lain on the green hill-side, with my plaid around me, best mantle of inspiration, my faithful Hector sitting like a very Christian by my side, glowring far aff into the glens after the sheep, or aiblins[1] lifting up his ee to the gled hovering close aneath the marbled roof of clouds,—bonny St Mary's Loch lying like a smile below, and a softened sun, scarcely warmer than the moon hersel, adorning without dazzling the day, over the heavens and the earth,—a beuk o' auld ballants, as yellow as the cowslips, in my hand or my bosom, and maybe, sir, my inkhorn dangling at a buttonhole, a bit stump o' pen, nae bigger than an auld wife's pipe, in my mouth; and a piece o' paper, torn out o' the hinder-end of a volume, crunkling on my knee;—on such a couch, Mr North, hath your Shepherd seen visions and dreamed dreams; but his een were never steeked;[2] and I continued aye to see and to hear a' outward things, although scarcely conscious at the time o' their real nature, so bright, wavering, and unsure-like was the haill[3] livin world, frae my lair on the knowe[4] beside the clear spring, to the distant weather-gleam. (*The Shepherd drinks.*) This is the best jug I have made yet, sir.

North. Have you been writing any poetry lately, James? The unparalleled success of *Queen Hynde* must have inspirited and inspired my dear Shepherd.

Shepherd. Success! She's no had muckle o' that, man. Me and Wordsworth are aboon the age we live in—it's no worthy o' us; but wait a whyleock[5]—wait only for a thousand years, or thereabouts, Mr North, and you'll see who will have speeled[6] to the tap o' the tree.

North. Nay, James, you are by far too popular at present to be entitled to posthumous fame. You are second only to Byron. But tell me, have you written anything since the Burning of Beregonium?

[1] *Aiblins*—perhaps. [2] *Steeked*—closed. [3] *Haill*—whole.
[4] *Knowe*—knoll. [5] *Whyleock*—little while. [6] *Speeled*—climbed.

Shepherd. Do you wish to hear an Ode to the Devil?

North. Nothing more. Look fiendish, James, and suit the action to the word. You have not imitated Burns?

Shepherd. Me imitate Burns![1] Faith, no!—Just let me tak a caulker o' the Glenlivet before I begin spootin. Noo for't—

(SHEPHERD *puts himself in attitude, and spouts.*)

HYMN TO THE DEVIL.

Speed thee, speed thee!
Liberty lead thee!
Many this night shall hearken and heed thee.
Far abroad,
Demigod!
What shall appal thee?
Javel, or Devil, or how shall we call thee?
Thine the night voices of joy and of weeping,
The whisper awake, and the vision when sleeping:
The bloated kings of the earth shall brood
On princedoms and provinces bought with blood,
Shall slubber, and snore, and to-morrow's breath
Shall order the muster and march of death:
The trumpets shall sound, and the gonfalons flee,
And thousands of souls step home to thee.
Speed thee, speed thee, &c.

The warrior shall dream of battle begun,
Of field-day and foray, and foeman undone;
Of provinces sacked, and warrior store,
Of hurry and havoc, and hampers of ore;
Of captive maidens for joys abundant,
And ransom vast when these grow redundant.
Hurray! for the foray. Fiends ride forth a-souling,
For the dogs of havoc are yelping and yowling.
Speed thee, speed thee, &c.

Make the bedesman's dream
With pleasure to teem;
To-day and to-morrow
He has but one aim.
And 'tis still the same, and 'tis still the same.
But well thou know'st the sot's demerit,
His richness of flesh, and his poorness of spirit;

[1] In this effusion the Shepherd has certainly *not* imitated Burns.

And well thy images thou canst frame,
On canvass of pride, with pencil of flame:
A broad demesne is a view of glory,
For praying a soul from purgatory:
And, O, let the dame be fervent and fair,
Amorous, and righteous, and husband beware!
For there's a confession so often repeated,
The eyes are enlightened, the life-blood is heated.
Hish!—Hush!—soft foot and silence,
The sons of the abbot are lords of the Highlands.
Thou canst make lubbard and lighthead agree,
Wallow a while, and come home to thee.
Speed thee, speed thee, &c.

Where goest thou next, by hamlet or shore,
When kings, when warriors, and priests are o'er?
These for thee have the most to do,
And these are the men must be looked unto.
On courtier deign not to look down,
Who swells at a smile, and faints at a frown.
With noble maid stay not to parle,
But give her one glance of the golden arle.
Then, oh, there's a creature thou needs must see,
Upright, and saintly, and stern is she!
'Tis the old maid, with visage demure,
With cat on her lap, and dogs on the floor.
Master, she'll prove a match for thee,
With her psalter, and crosier, and Ave Mari.
Move her with things above and below,
Tickle her, and teaze her from lip to toe;
Should all prove vain, and nothing can move;
If dead to ambition, and cold to love,
One passion still success will crown,
A glorious energy all thine own!
'Tis envy; a die that never can fail
With children, matron, or maiden stale.
Show them in dreams from night to day
A happy mother, and offspring gay;
Show them the maiden in youthful prime,
Followed and wooed, improving her time;
And their hearts will sicken with envy and spleen,
A leperous jaundice of yellow and green:
And though frightened for hell to a boundless degree,
They'll singe their dry periwigs yet with thee.
Speed thee, speed thee, &c.

Where goest thou next? Where wilt thou hie thee?
Still there is rubbish enough to try thee.
Whisper the matron of lordly fame,
There's a greater than she in splendour and name;
And her bosom shall swell with the grievous load,
And torrents of slander shall volley abroad,
Imbued with venom and bitter despair;
O sweet are the sounds to the Prince of the Air!
Reach the proud yeoman a bang with a spear,
And the tippling burgess a yerk on the ear;
Put fees in the eye of the poisoning leech,
And give the dull peasant a kick on the breech:
As for the flush maiden, the rosy elf,
You may pass her by, she will dream of herself.
But that all may be gain and nothing loss,
Keep eye on the men with the cowl and the cross;
Then shall the world go swimming before thee,
In a full tide of liberty, license, and glory.
Speed thee, speed thee, &c.

Hail, patriot spirit! thy labours be blest!
For of all great reformers, thyself wert the first:
Thou wert the first, with discernment strong,
To perceive that all rights divine were wrong;
And long hast thou spent thy sovereign breath,
In heaven above, and in earth beneath,
And roared it from thy burning throne,
The glory of independence alone;
Proclaiming to all, with fervour and irony,
That kingly dominion's all humbug and tyranny;
And whoso listeth may be free,
For freedom, full freedom's the word with thee;
That life has its pleasures—the rest is a sham,
And all that comes after a flim and a flam!
Speed thee, speed thee!
Liberty lead thee!
Many this night shall hearken and heed thee.
Hie abroad,
Demigod!
Who shall defame thee?
King of the Elements! how shall we name thee?

North. Delicious, James—delicious! That's above Barry Cornwall.

Shepherd. Him, indeed! Why, Mr North, he daur nae

mair speak o' the deevil in that gate,[1] than tak the Sun by the horns when he has entered Taurus.

North. Admirably spoken, most astronomical of Chaldeans.

Shepherd. I ken as muckle about the heathen mythology as Barry Cornwall does; but wha ever hears me taking ony o' their names in vain? It's a great sign o' weakness in ony poet o' the present day to be rinnin awa back into antiquity, when there's sae strong a spirit of life hotchin[2] ower yearth and sea in this very century.

North. Barry Cornwall is one of my pet poets—quite a love; he is so free from everything like affectation. I see, in the *Autographs of the Living Poets*, in Watts's *Souvenir*, first, Barry Cornwall, and immediately after that immortal name, B. W. Procter—no more like each other than a pea and a bean. What think you of that? Who is B. W. Procter? This is rather too much.

Shepherd. It's just maist intolerable impertinence. What right has he to tak up the room o' twa autographs for his ain share? But wha's C. Colton? I see his name in the *Literary Souvenir*.

North. Author of *Lacon, or, Many Things in Few Words;* a work that is advertised to be in the thirteenth edition, and I never have seen any man who has seen a copy of it. I begin to doubt its existence.

Shepherd. Nae beuk ever went into a real, even-down, *bonny fide* threttеen edition in this world, forbye the Bible, Shakspeare, and John Bunyan. It's a confounded lie—and that's "mony things in few words."

North. Colton is a clergyman and a bankrupt wine-merchant, and E. O. player, a dicer, and friend of the late W. Weare, Esq., murdered by that atrocious Whig, Jack Thurtell.

Shepherd. Huts!

North. Poz. Ever since his disappearance, laudatory paragraphs about this living and absent poet, evidently sent by himself to the gentlemen of the press, have been infesting the public prints—all puffs of *Lacon!* Let him show himself once more in London, and then I have a few words to whisper publicly into the ear of the Rev. C. Colton, author of *Hypocrisy, a Satire*, &c.

Shepherd. What for are you lookin so fierce and fearsome?

[1] *Gate*—manner. [2] *Hotchin*—heaving up and down.

But let's change the subject. Wad ye advise me to read *High-ways and Bye-ways?*

North. Yes, James. They are very spirited and amusing volumes, written by a gentleman and a scholar. Grattan is a fine fellow—a Whig to be sure—but every man has his failing—and I cannot but like him for his very name.[1]

Shepherd. I thocht he would be a good author, for I saw him abused like a tinkler in that feckless fouter, Taylor.[2]

North. Of course—he writes for Colburn.[3]

Shepherd. Hech, sirs! but that's awfu' mean—but I was jalousin[4] as much. Oh! Mr North—my dear freen', I was sorry sorry when Knight's *Quarterly Magazine* took a pain in its head, and gied a wamle ower the counter in the dead-thraws.[5] It was rather incomprehensible to me, for the maist part, wi' its Italian literature, and the lave o't; but the contributors were a set o' spunkie chiels—Collegians, as I understan', frae Cambridge College.[6] What's become o' them now that their Journal is dead?

North. I think I see them, like so many resurrection-men, digging up the *Album.* Yes! Hogg, they are clever, accomplished chaps, with many little pleasing impertinencies of their own, and may make a figure. How assinine, not to have marched a levy *en masse* into Ebony's *sanctum sanctorum!*

Shepherd. I never thocht o' that before. So it was. But then ye behave sae cavalierly to contributors! It's a horrible thing to be buried alive in the Balaam Box![7]

North. By the way, James, that Ode to the Devil of yours makes me ask you, if you have seen Dr Hibbert's book on Apparitions?[8]

Shepherd. Ghosts?—no. Is't gude?

North. Excellent. The Doctor first gives a general view

[1] Thomas Colley Grattan published several works of fiction; and for some years was British Consul at Boston, U.S.

[2] *Feckless fouter*—feeble rascal. Taylor and Hessey were the publishers of the *London Magazine.*

[3] Colburn was the publisher of a rival magazine, the *New Monthly.*

[4] *Jalousin*—suspecting. [5] *Dead-thraws*—agonies of death.

[6] Among these collegians were Macaulay and Praed.

[7] The depository of rejected contributions.

[8] *Sketches of the Philosophy of Apparitions; or, an Attempt to trace such Illusions to their Physical Causes.* By SAMUEL HIBBERT, M.D., F.R.S.E.

of the particular morbid affections with which the production of phantoms is often connected.

Shepherd. What—the blude and stomach?

North. Just so, James. Apparitions are likewise considered by him as nothing more than ideas, or the recollected images of the mind, which have been rendered more vivid than actual impressions.

Shepherd. Does the Doctor daur to say that there are nae real ghosts? If sae, he needna come out to Ettrick. I've heard that failosophers say there is nae satisfactory evidence of the existence of flesh-and-blude men (rax[1] me ower the loaf, I want a shave[2]), but o' the existence o' ghosts and fairies I never heard before that the proof was counted defective. I've seen scores o' them, baith drunk and sober.

North. Well, Hogg *versus* Hibbert. Sam very ingeniously points out that, in well-authenticated ghost-stories, of a supposed supernatural character, the ideas which are rendered so unduly intense, as to induce spectral illusions, may be traced to such fantastical agents of prior belief, as are incorporated in the various systems of superstition, which for ages possessed the minds of the vulgar.

Shepherd. There may be some sense in that, after a'. What mair does the Doctor say?

North. Why, James, my friend Hibbert is something of a metaphysician, although he pins his faith too slavishly on some peculiar dogmas of the late Dr Brown.[3]

Shepherd. Metafeesics are ae thing, and poetry anither; but Dr Brown was a desperate bad poet, Mr North, and it would tak some trouble to convince me that he knew muckle about human nature, either the quick or the dead.

North. James, you are mistaken. However, my friend Hibbert well observes, that since apparitions are ideas equaling or exceeding in vividness actual impressions, there ought to be some important and definite laws of the mind which have given rise to this undue degree of violence. These he undertakes to explain, and he does so—with the qualification I mention—ingeniously, and even satisfactorily.

Shepherd. That's a'thegither aboon my capacity. What

[1] *Rax*—reach. [2] *Shave*—slice.

[3] The immediate predecessor of Professor Wilson in the chair of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh; born in 1778, died in 1820.

would become of the Doctor's theory, if he had ever sleepit a' nicht, three in a bed, wi' twa ghosts, as I hae done? They were baith o' them a confunded deal mair vivid than ony bygone actual impressions, or sensations, or ideas, or ony ither words of that outlandish lingua. Can an idea nip a man's thees black and blue, and rug out a handfu' o' hair out o' the head o' him? Neither Dr Brown nor Dr Hibbert will gar[1] me believe onything sae unwiselike.

North. The last object, James, of the Doctor's ingenious dissertation was to have established this: That all the subordinate incidents connected with phantoms, might be explained on the following general principle; that in every undue excitement of our feelings (as, for instance, when ideas become more vivid than actual impression), the operations of the intellectual faculty of the mind sustain corresponding modifications, by which the efforts of the judgment are rendered proportionably incorrect.

Shepherd. And does Dr Hibbert make that weel out?

North. No. He very truly and prudently observes, that an object of this nature cannot be attempted but in connection *with almost all the phenomena of the human mind.* To pursue the inquiry, therefore, any farther, would be to make a dissertation on apparitions the absurd vehicle of a regular system of metaphysics.

Shepherd. That would be maist ridiculous, indeed. Neither could the Doctor, honest man, hope to accomplish such a task before he was an apparition himself. But the beuk must be a curious ane indeed, and you must gie me a reading o't.

North. I will. The second edition, I hear, is printing by Oliver and Boyd, with a somewhat new and much improved arrangement of the metaphysical matter.

Shepherd. Sir, I wish there was ony waukening o' Mr Tickler. It's no like him to fa' asleep. Whisht! whisht! Hear till him! hear till him!

North. Somnium Scipionis!

Tickler (*asleep*). It was creditable to a British public. Poor, dear little soul, she has been cruelly treated altogether. My sweet Miss Lætitia Foote,[2] although I am now rather——

Shepherd. Isna the wicked auld deevil dreamin' o' that play-actress!

[1] *Gar*—make.

[2] Afterwards the Countess of Harrington.

North. Why, our excellent Tickler is still the same perfect gentleman even in his dreams. Did you ever hear, James, of such unnatural wickedness as that of the parents of this beautiful sinner? Her own father made her own mother play Romeo to her Juliet, when she was a girl just entered into her teens!

Shepherd. Mercy me! I wonder the roof o' the barn did not fall and smother them: and can you believe what the newspapers said, that the parents conneeved at her being Cornel Barclay's[1] miss? If so, I hope there's naething heterodox in conjecturing that their names are baith down, in round text, in the deevil's doomsday-beuk. But there's the mair excuse and pity for the puir lassie. What paper was't that said she was ruined past a' redemption?

North. The *Times.* But the mean eunuch lied. There is redemption both here and hereafter for a child betrayed by her parents into the embraces of an artful and accomplished seducer. Miss Foote loved him—was faithful to him—was never extravagant,—in her worse than orphan condition was contented to be recognised as his mistress—did what she could to support her parents by her talents on the stage,—and finally cooled in her affection towards her seducer, to whom she had always been true, only when she discovered that his whole conduct was one continued deception, and that the best years of her life were wearing hopelessly away in anxiety, difficulties, and evils, enough to sicken the strongest, and freeze the warmest heart.

Shepherd. These are just my sentiments. As for Barclay and Hayne, wha cares about them? The Cornel is a man of the world, and there may be some excuse for him, perhaps, if the truth were all known. Mr Hayne seems a sumph. Miss Fit is weel rid o' them baith.

North. My Pea-green Friend,[2] who is apparently a good-hearted fellow, and supposed himself in love, would have tired of his wife in a fortnight, and taken again to the training of White-headed Bob. Miss Foote has been deservedly pardoned by the public voice,—and, suppose we drink her health, poor soul. Miss Foote!

[1] Colonel Berkeley, afterwards Earl Fitzhardinge.

[2] Pea-green Hayne, an exquisite of that period—so called from the verdure of his character and attire.

Tickler (*dormiens*). Three times three.—Hurra! hurra! hurra!

Shepherd. That's fearsome. Only think how his mind corresponds wi' his friends, even in a dwam o' drink,—for I never saw him sae fou since the King's visit! I'll just pu' the nose o' him, or kittle it wi' the neb o' my keelivine pen.[1] (*Sic facit*).

Tickler (*awaking*). The cases are totally different. But, Hogg, what are you staring at? Why, you have been sleeping since twelve o'clock.

Shepherd. I hae some thocht o' writing a play—a Pastoral Drama.

North. What, James! after Allan Ramsay—after the *Gentle Shepherd?*

Shepherd. What for no? That's a stupid apothegm, though you said it. I wad hae mair variety o' characters, and inceedents, and passions o' the human mind in my drama—mair fun, and frolic, and daffin[2]—in short, mair o' what you, and the like o' you, ca' coorseness;—no sae muckle see-sawing between ony twa individual hizzies, as in Allan;—and, aboon a' things, a mair natural and wiselike[3] catastrophe. My peasant or shepherd lads should be sae in richt earnest, and no turn out Sirs and Lords upon you at the hinder-end o' the drama. No but that I wad aiblins introduce the upper ranks intil the wark; but they should stand abeigh frae[4] the lave o' the characters,—by way o' contrast, or by way o' "similitude in dissimilitude," as that haverer[5] Wordsworth is sae fond o' talking and writing about. Aboon a' things, I wuss to draw the pictur o' a perfect and polished Scotch gentleman o' the auld schule.

North. Videlicet,—Tickler!

Shepherd. Him, the lang-legged sinner!—Na, na;—I'll immortalise baith him and yoursel in my "Ain Life,"—in my yawtobeeograffy. I'll pay aff a' auld scores there, I'se warrant you. Deevil tak me, gin[6] I haena a great mind—(*a pause,—jug*)—to hawn[7] you down to the latest posterity as a couple o'——

North. James!—James!—James!

Shepherd. Confound thae grey glittering eyne o' yours,

[1] *Keelivine*—chalk pencil.
[2] *Daffin*—humorsome nonsense.
[3] *Wiselike*—judicious.
[4] *Abeigh frae*—aloof from.
[5] *Haverer*—proser.
[6] *Gin*—if.
[7] *Hawn*—hand.

you warlock that you are!—I maun like you, and respeck you, and admire you too, Mr North; but och, sirs! do you ken, that whiles I just girn, out-by yonner, wi' perfect wudness[1] when I think o' you, and your chiels about you, lauchin at, and rinnin down me, and ither men o' genius——

North. James!—James!—James!

Tickler. Dig it well into him—he is a confounded churl.

Shepherd. No half sae bad as yoursel, Mr Tickler. He's serious sometimes, and ane kens when he is serious. But as for you, there's no a grain o' sincerity in a' your composition. You wadna shed a tear gin your Shepherd, as you ca' him, were dead, and in the moulds.

Tickler (*evidently much affected*). Have I not left you my fiddle in my will. When I am gone, Jamie, use her carefully—keep her in good strings—and, whenever you screw her up, think of Timothy Tickler—and——(*His utterance is choked*).

North. James! James! James!—Timothy! Timothy! Timothy!—Something too much of this. Reach me over that pamphlet; I wish to light my cigar. The last speech and dying words of the Rev. William Lisle Bowles!

Shepherd. What! a new poem? I houp it is. Lisle Bolls is a poet o' real genius. I never could thole a sonnet till I read his. Is the pamphlet a poem?

North. No, Shepherd. It is prose;—being a farther portion of Botheration about Pope.[2]

Shepherd. I care little about Pop—except his Louisa and Abelard. That's a grand elegy; but for coorseness it beats me hollow. The subject is coorse. "A helpless lover bound and bleeding lies,"—that is a line, which, if I had written it in the *Spy*,[3] would hae lost me five hundred subscribers.

North. Mr Bowles, in his edition of Pope, committed himself, I think, on one point of essential importance. He did not do justice to Pope's character as a man. My friend Bowles (for I love and admire him), has therefore proved somewhat restive and obstinate when taxed with this misdeed. He will not eat in a single word,—no, not even a

[1] *Wudness*—distraction.

[2] The "botheration about Pope" refers to a protracted controversy originating in a dispute between Bowles and Campbell, as to whether nature or art supplied the better materials for poetry. Most of the leading literary men of the day had been drawn into the discussion.

[3] A weekly paper published by Hogg in 1810.

syllable,—not so much as the least letter in the alphabet; and, being a most able and accomplished man, he comes forth a controversialist, and lays about him with a vigour and skill highly conciliatory and commendable. But he was originally in the wrong respecting Pope's personal character; and in the wrong will he be until doomsday.

Tickler. Most assuredly. Who cares a single curse about this, that, or t'other trifle? Can a man of surpassing intellect and genius not indulge himself in a little peevishness or variableness of humour, without being taxed with hypocrisy, insincerity, and other base and odious qualities or affections? How the devil came it about, that a true poet, like Bowles, should have scrutinised and judged the character of such a man as Pope in that cold, calculating, prying, and unindulgent spirit, which might have been expected from some brainless and heartless proser?

North. Not knowing, can't say.

Tickler. Pope was one of the most amiable men that ever lived. Fine and delicate as were the temper and temperament of his genius, he had a heart capable of the warmest human affection. He was indeed a loving creature!

North. Come, come, Timothy, you know you were sorely cut an hour or two ago—so do not attempt Characteristics. But, after all, Bowles does not say that Pope was unamiable.

Tickler. Yes, he does—that is to say, no man can read, even now, all that he has written about Pope, without thinking, on the whole, somewhat indifferently of the man Pope. It is for this I abuse our friend Bowles.

Shepherd. Ay, ay—I recollect now some havers o' Bolls's about the Blounts,—Martha and Theresa, I think, you call them. Puir wee bit hunched-backed, windle-strae-legged, gleg-eed,[1] clever, acute, ingenious, sateerical, weel-informed, warm-hearted, real philosophical, and maist poetical creature, wi' his sounding translation o' a' Homer's works, that reads just like an original War-Yepic,—His Yessay on Man, that, in spite o' what a set o' ignoramuses o' theological critics say about Bolingbroke and Crousass, and heterodoxy and atheism, and like havers, is just ane o' the best moral discourses that ever I heard in or out o' the poupit,—His Yepistles about the Passions, and sic like, in the whilk he goes baith deep and

[1] *Gleg-eed*—sharp-eyed.

high, far deeper and higher baith than mony a modern poet, who must needs be either in a diving-bell or a balloon,—His Rape o' the Lock o' Hair, wi' a' these Sylphs floating about in the machinery o' the Rosicrucian Philosophism, just perfectly yelegant and gracefu', and as gude, in their way, as onything o' my ain about fairies, either in the *Queen's Wake* or *Queen Hynde*,—His Louisa to Abelard is, as I said before, coorse in the subject-matter, but, O sirs! powerfu' and pathetic in execution—and sic a perfect spate[1] o' versification! His unfortunate lady, wha sticked hersel for love wi' a drawn sword, and was afterwards seen as a ghost, dim-beckoning through the shade—a verra poetical thocht surely, and full both of terror and pity——

North. Stop, James—You will run yourself out of breath. Why, you said, a few minutes ago, that you did not care much about Pope, and were not at all familiar with his works —you have them at your finger ends.

Shepherd. I never ken what's in my mind till it begins to work. Sometimes I fin' mysel just perfectly stupid—my mind, as Locke says in his *Treatise on Government*, quite a *carte blanche*—I just ken that I'm alive by my breathing—when, a' at ance, my sowl begins to hum like a hive about to cast off a swarm—out rush a thousand springing thochts, for a while circling round and round like verra bees—and then, like them too, winging their free and rejoicing way into the mountain wilderness, and a' its blooming heather—returning, in due time, with store o' wax on their thees, and a wamefu' o' hinney, redolent of blissful dreams gathered up in the sacred solitudes of Nature. Ha! ha! ha! ha! isna that Wordsworthian and sonorous? But we've forgotten wee Pop. Hae you ony mair to say anent him and Bolls?

Tickler. Bowles also depreciates his genius.

North. No, no, no!

Tickler. Yes, yes, yes!

Shepherd. Gude safe us, Mr Tickler, you're no sober yet, or you wad never contradic Mr North.

Tickler. Bowles also depreciates his genius. What infernal stuff all that about nature and art! Why Pope himself settles the question against our friend Bowles in one line :—

" Nature must give way to Art."

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[1] *Spate*—stream in flood.

North. Pope's poetry is full of nature, at least of what I have been in the constant habit of accounting nature for the last threescore and ten years. But (thank you, James, that snuff is really delicious!) leaving nature and art, and all that sort of thing, I wish to ask a single question: What poet of this age, with the exception perhaps of Byron, can be justly said, when put into close comparison with Pope, to have written the English language at all?

Shepherd. Tut, tut, Mr North; you needna gang far to get an answer to that question. I can write the English language—I'll no say as well as Pop, for he was an Englishman, but——

North. Well, I shall except you, James;—but, with the single exception of Hogg, from what living poet is it possible to select any passage that will bear to be spouted (say by James Ballantyne[1] himself, the best declaimer extant) after any one of fifty casually taken passages from Pope?—Not one.

Tickler. What would become of Bowles himself, with all his elegance, pathos, and true feeling?—Oh! dear me, James, what a dull, dozing, disjointed, dawdling, dowdy of a drawl would be his Muse, in her very best voice and tune, when called upon to get up and sing a solo after the sweet and strong singer of Twickenham!

North. Or Wordsworth—with his eternal—Here we go up, up, and up, and here we go down, down, and here we go roundabout, roundabout!—Look at the nerveless laxity of his *Excursion!*—What interminable prosing!—The language is out of condition:—fat and fozy, thick-winded, purfled and plethoric. Can he be compared with Pope?—Fie on't! no, no, no!—Pugh, pugh!

Tickler. Southey—Coleridge—Moore?

North. No; not one of them. They are all eloquent, diffusive, rich, lavish, generous, prodigal of their words. But so are they all deficient in sense, muscle, sinew, thews, ribs, spine. Pope, as an artist, beats them hollow. Catch him twaddling.

Tickler. It is a bad sign of the intellect of an age to depreciate the genius of a country's classics. But the attempt covers such critics with shame, and undying ridicule pursues them and their abettors. The Lake Poets began this sense-

[1] The friend of Sir Walter Scott.

less clamour against the genius of Pope. You know their famous critique on the moonlight scene in his translation of the *Iliad*?[1]

North. I do. Presumptuous, ignorant trash! But help yourself, Tim, to another jorum. What is the matter with your cigar? Draw it through your lips. It is somewhat arid. You will never be a smoker.

Tickler. Not I, indeed. There, that is better. Admirable old Roscoe has edited Pope well, and he rebuts Bowles manfully and successfully.

North. He does so. Yet, after all, Bowles is the livelier writer. Here's their healths in a bumper. (*Bibunt Omnes.*)

Shepherd. I care far less about Pop, and the character and genius of Pop, than I do about our own Byron. Many a cruel thing has been uttered against him, and I wish, Mr North, you would vindicate him, now that his hand is cauld.

North. I have written a few pages for my Feb. Number,

[1] "As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night!
O'er heaven's clear azure spreads her sacred light,
When not a breath disturbs the deep serene,
And not a cloud o'ercasts the solemn scene;
Around her throne the vivid planets roll,
And stars unnumber'd gild the glowing pole;
O'er the dark trees a yellower verdure shed,
And tip with silver every mountain's head:
Then shine the vales, the rocks in prospect rise,
A flood of glory bursts from all the skies:
The conscious swains, rejoicing in the sight,
Eye the blue vault and bless the useful light."
Pope's Homer, *Iliad*, viii., 687-698.

Wordsworth's critique is as follows:—"To what a low state knowledge of the most obvious and important phenomena had sunk, is evident from the style in which Dryden has executed a description of night in one of his tragedies, and Pope his translation of the celebrated moonlight scene in the *Iliad*. A blind man in the habit of attending accurately to descriptions casually dropped from the lips of those around him, might easily depict these appearances with more truth. Dryden's lines are vague, bombastic, and senseless; those of Pope, though he had Homer to guide him, are throughout false and contradictory. The verses of Dryden, once highly celebrated, are forgotten; those of Pope still retain their hold upon public estimation—nay, there is not a passage of descriptive poetry which, at this day, finds so many and such ardent admirers. Strange to think of an enthusiast, as may have been the case with thousands, reciting these verses under the cope of a moonlight sky without having his raptures in the least disturbed by a suspicion of their absurdity."—(Appendix to Preface.) The merit of Pope's description is fully discussed, and the soundness of Wordsworth's criticism again called in question, in Wilson's review of Sotheby's Homer, (*Blackwood's Magazine*, vol. xxx., p. 103-104.)

which I think will please you, James. Pray, what do you consider the most wicked act of Byron's whole wicked life?

Shepherd. I declare to God, that I do not know of any one wicked act in his life at all. Tickler there used to cut him up long ago—what says he now?

Tickler. The base multitude, day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year, got up brutal falsehoods concerning his private life, and these they mixed up and blended with their narrow and confused conceptions of his poetical productions, till they imagined the real living, flesh-and-blood Byron, to be a monster, familiarly known to them in all his hideous propensities and practices. He was, with all his faults, a noble being, and I shall love Hobhouse[1] as long as I live. What it is to be a gentleman!

North. The character of one of the greatest poets the world ever saw, in a very few years, will be discerned in the clear light of truth. How quickly all misrepresentations die away! One hates calumny, because it is ugly and odious in its own insignificant and impotent stinking self. But it is almost always extremely harmless. I believe, at this moment, that Byron is thought of, as a man, with an almost universal feeling of pity, forgiveness, admiration, and love. I do not think it would be safe in the most popular preacher to abuse Byron now,—and that not merely because he is now dead, but because England knows the loss she has sustained in the extinction of her most glorious luminary.

Shepherd. I hae nae heart to speak ony mair about him—puir fallow. I'll try the pickled this time—the scalloped are beginning to lie rather heavy on my stomach. Oysters is the only thing maist we canna get at Altrive. But we have capital cod and haddock now in St Mary's Loch.

Tickler. James!—James!—James!

Shepherd. Nane o' your jeering, Mr Tickler. The naturalisation of sea-fishes into fresh-water lochs was recommended some years ago in the *Edinburgh Review*, and twa-three o' us, out-by yonner, have carried the thing into effect. We tried the oysters too, but we could mak nathing ava o' them—they dwindled into a kind o' wulks, and were quite fushionless,[2] a' beards and nae bodies.

[1] John Cam Hobhouse, afterwards Lord Broughton—the friend of Byron when living, and his defender when dead.

[2] *Fushionless*—without sap.

Tickler. I thought the scheme plausible at the time. I read it in the *Edinburgh*, which I like, by the way, much better as a zoological than a political journal. Have you sent a creel of codlings to the editor?

Shepherd. Why, I have felt some delicacy about it, just at present. I was afraid that he might think it a bribe for a favourable opinion of *Queen Hynde.*[1]

North. No—no. Jeffrey has a soul above bribery or corruption. All the cod in Christendom would not shake his integrity. You had, however, better send half-a-dozen rizzered haddocks to Tom Campbell.

Shepherd. My boy Tammy wull never choke himsel wi' my fish-banes, Mr North. I care for nae man's good word, unless it be your ain, sir; howsumever, to speak truth, I cannot but think it verra paltry and mean-like in the author o' the *Pleasures of Hope*, never once in his born days, in that Magazine o' his,[2] to hae said a single ceevil, or kind, or britherly word about me. What think ye?

North. I think it to the last degree contemptible. Greater men than he, James, have done you justice. North, Scott, Byron, Southey, Coleridge, &c. &c. &c.

Shepherd. I'm no compleenin. Thank God, I ken my ain worth, as a man and a poet—and let mankind, or the women folk either, judge between *Kilmeny* and *Reullura.*[3] It's for his ain sake, no for mine, that I could hae wished he had spoken kindly of a brother poet, who have had mickle to struggle against, but have got to the tap o' the tree at last—thanks to my ain speelin.

North. Tom is fickle and capricious—and ever was so—but he has a fine, a noble genius.

Shepherd. I'm no dispooting that, Mr North. No doubt, his *Theodric* is a grand, multifarious, sublime poem; although, confound me, gin the warst fifty lines in a' *Queen Hynde* are nae worth the haill vollumm. If ever there was even-down cheatery in this world, it is in axing eight shillings for a parcel o' auld bits o' poems that hae been in a' the magazines, and newspapers, and *Cabinets* and *Mirrors*, and so forth, in the kingdom. I'm sure if I had a pension from Government of £200 a-year, like Tam Campbell, I wad never play the public siccan a shabby trick.

[1] A poem by Hogg, published in 1825.

[2] *The New Monthly.*

[3] Poems,—the one by Hogg, the other by Campbell.

North. Why, as to that, James, I cannot quite agree with you, my dear Shepherd. There are always some golden points in the clay of Campbell's poetry, which are rinsed out by the running waters of my criticism; and even his newest trifles in verse will read tolerably enough, when interspersed with judgment throughout his various volumes.

Hogg. Weel, man,—let us drink his health; and, if you please, standing, with all the honours.

North. Excuse me, gentle Shepherd. A gouty foot, a rheumatic knee, ten tumblers, and threescore-and-ten years, impose upon me a sedentary habit. As for shouting, remember the hour—nay, there is no occasion for looking at your watch; as soon as the boiler is empty, we depart.

(*Mr Campbell's health is drunk cordially.*)

Shepherd. Wha's conceit[1] was the Boiler?

Tickler. Your humble servant's. Ambrose goes to bed regularly at twelve, and Richard half an hour after. Occasionally, as at present, old friends are loath to go—so, not to disturb the slumbers of as worthy a family as is in all Scotland. I ordered the boiler you now see, at Begby and Dickson's, St Andrew Square. It holds exactly six common kettlefuls —Strike it with the poker—Ay, James, you hear by the clearness of the tinkle that it is nearly low water.

Shepherd. Deel ma care. I ken where the pump is in the back green—and, if the wall's fanged,[2] I'll bring up a gush wi' a single drive. If no, let us finish the spirits by itsel. I never saw the match o' this tall square fallow o' a green bottle for hauding spirits. The verra neck o' him hauds spirits for a jug, before you get down to his shouthers; and we'se a' three be blin' fou or we see the crystal knob inside o' the doup o' him peering up amang the subsiding waters of Glenlivet.

North. I have bequeathed you Magog in my settlement, James. With it, and Tickler's Cremona, many a cheerful night will you spend, when we two old Codgers have laid off life's pack—

> At our feet a green grass turf,
> And at our head a stone.

Shepherd. You and Mr Tickler are very gude in leaving

[1] *Conceit*—notion.

[2] When the piston of a pump-well ceases to work from having become too dry, water is poured down upon it to restore the action. This operation is called *fanging* the well.

me things in your wull; but I would prefer something in haun—

North. Then, my dear friend, there is a receipt for your last article—the Shepherd's Calendar.

Shepherd. Twa Tens! Come noo, sirs, let me pay the reckoning.

Tickler. We have not, I think, drunk the King's ministers to-night. Allow me to give them.

Hogg. Wi' a' my heart. That man Canning will be the salvation of the cuntra.

North. There never was any period, certainly, in which the Parliament of the United Kingdoms assembled under circumstances more interesting than the present. In times of war, no doubt, the topics submitted to discussion may often be, in one point of view, of a more dazzling character—nay, they sometimes have been, singly considered, of more paramount and overwhelming importance. But in times when the empire is involved in a great conflict with external force, it is absolutely in vain to expect that questions not immediately connected with that conflict, should in Parliament command any more than a subordinate measure of attention from those who are actually intrusted with the government of the country. The opposition members compel any subjects they please into discussion; but seldom, very seldom, is the discussion thorough or satisfactory. Intellect does not meet intellect here on fair terms. Ministers make speeches, no doubt, but the real *aside* is, always "wait till the national existence, or, at least, honour be safe, and then we will go with you on an equal footing into the consideration of questions affecting only particular points of her domestic machinery." Is not this true, Tickler?

Tickler. Certainly; go on with what you were saying. I like to hear you speak right on without that botheration of the eternal cigar. This vice, sir, is the bane of all real flow of talk.

North. Nonsense—nonsense. The war has been over for ten years—it took not a few years to bring us back to feel a state of peace as natural to us after a war of such duration—it took a considerable time to bring back the habits, the interests, the feelings even, of various classes, into their proper channels. All this has now been done: the population of Britain is throughout employed, tranquil, happy, and con-

tented. Agriculture and trade are flourishing. Direct taxation, in all probability, will ere long have ceased to exist at all here. Everything in Britain is peace, industry, and plenty. Now is the time for the serious and deliberate discussions of civil and domestic questions; and full advantage seems to be taken of the happy time by Ministers, who can now concentrate upon these questions the same great talents that formerly distanced all their antagonists, when exerted on topics of another description—and who, exerting these great talents with their accustomed honesty and integrity, bid fair ere long to chase their adversaries out of the new field as triumphantly as they had routed them on the old.

Hogg. Verra bonny talk, Mr North; but what say you to the divisions in the Cabinet? The house that is divided against itself cannot stand. That's the text, Christopher.

Tickler. I am really sorry for the thing, but I see no likelihood of an end to it.

North. And I don't wish to see any, that's my say.

Tickler. A paradox!—What's your meaning?

North. My meaning is plain and simple enough, Mr Tickler. I assert, that if the government of this country is to be in the hands of anything worthy of the name of a Cabinet (intellectually considered), and not in the hands of a single Minister, a real *premier;* and if the members of the Cabinet are to be honest men (that is to say, Tories), it is absolutely impossible that there should not exist great differences of opinion within that Cabinet, in relation to questions such as must mainly occupy the attention of the Government and the Parliament of an empire such as this, in times and under circumstances like the present. And, sir, I farther assert, that no Cabinet could long maintain its hold upon public respect, if the existence of such difference of opinion were not well known all over the country.

Tickler. Explain—explain.

Hogg. Yon was a queer apothegm.

North. Patience a moment, gents. The country must be represented in the Cabinet, quite as effectually as in the Parliament, otherwise the country will not have confidence in it. We all know very well that questions such as are now in agitation, are questions in regard to which very great differences of opinion do, and must, prevail in the country—in the real sound part of the population. We all know that opposite

interests exist in regard to every one of them; and though we are all aware that no great public good can be done without sacrifices of some sort, we are also aware that no great public good can be done, until, through deliberate and sincere discussion, the minds of those by whom the sacrifices are to be made, are satisfied that they must be made. Now, men can never be persuaded that questions of this sort are capable of undergoing that measure of real discussion and investigation which they ought to receive ere Government is pledged to any one side, in any one of them, in any Cabinet but a divided Cabinet. We must be convinced that, in regard to Ireland for instance, the feelings, not of one, nor of two, but of all the really great classes of honest population—of honest interest—of honest feeling—(for I say nothing of the real *enemies of the country*, and their monkey tricks),—we must be satisfied that all these are virtually represented within the Cabinet; otherwise we cannot be convinced that the measure which Government purposes in regard to Ireland is the proper measure; that is to say, the measure best adapted to conciliate the opinion and meet the views of the greatest number among the parties who have, and must have, different interests and feelings as to the matter in question—the measure that comes nearest to the greatest number of the various measures which these parties severally propose and advocate.

Tickler. Why, certainly these are not dictator times.

North. Not they; not they, truly. Calmness and prudence must preside now. Public opinion is, after all, the court of first and the court of the last resort. We do not expect differences of opinion to cease either in or out of the Cabinet; but we expect that the elements of public opinion, however various, shall be virtually represented in the Cabinet—we expect that the Cabinet shall, like a band of skilful chemists, sit in judgment upon those elements as they separately exist, and decide what is the *tertium quid* that will offer least violence to the greatest number of these elements; and, this being done, we then expect that Parliament shall sanction, and the country approve the measure, which has found favour, not with the opinion of any one intellect, however elevated, but with the candour and wisdom of a set of honest men, who have laboured to understand the interest and the opinions of all, and to conciliate the interests and the opinions of as many

as they could—who never could have done this unless there had really existed great differences of individual opinion among themselves—and who, in their own conduct in regard to the preparation of their measure, have set an example of that spirit of mutual forbearance and mutual concession which they expected to see imitated in the conduct of the Parliament at large, when their measure is discussed in the Parliament; in the conduct of the nation at large, when their measure comes to be carried into execution.

Hogg. Eh, man! what for are ye no in the House yoursel? —Ye wad let them hear sense on baith sides o' their heads, I'm thinking.

Tickler. Well said, James. The upshot then is, Christopher, that you would rather have what Eldon, Canning, Wellington, Liverpool, Peel, Robinson, and Huskisson agree in considering the most practically prudent thing, than what any one of them thinks the thing most in unison with the dictates of absolute or abstract wisdom.

North. Even so. And the nation thinks exactly as I do.

Hogg. I wonder ye dinna resign your ain big chair, then; and let us have a divided administration of the Magazine.

North. You could not have chosen a more unfortunate simile, Hogg. Sir, my Cabinet is completely a divided one. I look on myself as the Liverpool of it,—you, Tickler, are decidedly the Canning,—the Adjutant is our Peel and our Wellington both in one,—Y. Y. Y. is our Eldon——

Hogg. And me? what am I?

North. You are Lord Melville—we leave you the Scotch department; and when my boats are got into order at Buchanan Lodge,[1] you shall have the Admiralty too. Are you a good sailor, Shepherd?

Hogg. I dinna ken. I never tried yet muckle, except on fresh water.

Tickler. I should rather consider Hogg as the Representative of the country interests in general.

North. I have no objections to arrange your seats as you like best yourselves. I hope, however, that, differing upon particular matters as we do, and always must do, we shall always continue to be one in heart and in hand as to the real points.

[1] The *imaginary* country-residence of Christopher North, on the banks of the Firth of Forth.

Hogg. Whilk are?

North. The religion of our fathers—the institutions of our fathers—the edification of the public—and our own emolument.

Tickler. A capital creed. Do you conform, Hogg.

Hogg. Are ye gaun to raise the price of a sheet this Lady-Day, Mr North?

North. My dear Hogg, what would you have? You are rolling in wealth—are you not?

Hogg. Ay; but I wad like fine to be ower the head a'thegither, man. That's my apothegm.

North. Let me see—Well, I think I may promise you a twenty-gallon tree this next Whitsunday, by way of a douceur—a small perquisite.

Hogg. Twenty gallons, man,—that does not serve our house for sax weeks in the summer part of the year, when a' the leeterary warld is tramping about. But ne'er heed—mony thanks to you for your kind offer, sir.

North. You must come down to my "happy rural seat of various view," James, on your spring visit to Edinburgh—Buchanan Lodge.

Shepherd. Wi' a' my heart, Mr North. I hear you've been biggin a bonny Lodge near Larkfield yonder, within the murmur of the sea. A walk on the beach is a gran' thing for an appetite. Let's hear about your house.

North. The whole tenement is on the ground flat. I abhor stairs; and there can be no peace in any mansion where heavy footsteps may be heard overhead. Suppose, James, three sides of a square—You approach the front by a fine serpentine avenue, and enter, slap-bang, through a wide glass-door, into a greenhouse, a conservatory of everything rich and rare in the world of flowers. Folding doors are drawn noiselessly into the walls, as if by magic, and lo! drawing-room and dining-room, stretching east and west in dim and distant perspective, commanding the Firth, the sea, the kingdom of Fife, and the Highland mountains!

Shepherd. Mercy on us, what a panorama!

North. Another side of the square contains kitchen, servants' room, &c.; and the third side my study and bedrooms,—all still, silent, composed, standing obscure, unseen, unapproachable, holy. The fourth side of the square is not,—shrubs,

and trees, and a productive garden shut me in from behind; while a ring-fence, enclosing about five acres, just sufficient for my nag and cow, form a magical circle, into which nothing vile or profane can intrude. ODoherty alone has overleaped my wall,—but the Adjutant was in training for his great match (ten miles an hour), and when he ran bolt against me in Addison's Walk,[1] declared upon honour that he was merely taking a step across the country, and that he had no idea of being within a mile of any human abode. However, he staid dinner—and over the Sunday.

Shepherd. Do you breed poultry, sir?—You dinna? Do't then. You hae plenty o' bounds within five yacre. But mind you, big[2] nae regular hen-house. You'll hae bits o' sheds, nae doubt, ahint the house, amang the offishes, and through amang the grounds; and the belts o' plantations are no very wide, nor the sherubberies stravagin awa into wild mountainous regions o' heather, whins, and breckans.

North. Your imagination, James, is magnificent, even in negatives. But is all this poetry about hen-roosts?

Shepherd. Ay. Let the creturs mak their ain nests, where'er they like, like pheasants, or patricks, or muirfowl. Their flesh will be the sappier, and mair highly flavoured on the board, and their shape and plummage beautifuller far, strutting about at liberty among your suburbs. Aboon a' things, for the love o' Heevin, nae Cavies![3] I can never help greeting, half in anger half in pity, when I see the necks o' some half-a-score forlorn chuckies jouking out and in the narrow bars o' their prison-house, dabbing at daigh and drummock.[4] I wonder if Mrs Fry ever saw sic a pitiful spectacle.

North. I must leave the feathers to my females, James.

Shepherd. Canna you be an overseer? Let the hens aye set theirsels; and never offer to tak ony notice o' the clockers. They canna thole being looked at, when they come screeching out frae their het eggs, a' in a fever, with their feathers tapsetowry, and howking holes in the yearth, till the gravel gangs down-through and aff among the plummage like dew-draps, and now scouring aff to some weel-kend corner for drink and victual.

[1] So named after the celebrated walk in the grounds of Magdalen College, Oxford, where Professor Wilson was educated. [2] *Big*—build.
[3] *Cavies*—hen-coops. [4] *Daigh and drummock*—dough and cold porridge.

North. You amaze me, James. You are opening up quite a new world to me. The mysteries of incubation. . . .

Hogg. Hae a regular succession o' clackins frae about the middle o' March till the end o' August, and never devour aff a haill clackin at ance. Aye keep some three or four pullets for eerocks, or for devouring through the winter; and never set aboon fourteen eggs to ae hen, nor indeed mair than a dizzen, unless she be a weel-feathered mawsie,[1] and broad across the shoulders.

North. Why, the place will be absolutely overrun with barn-door fowl.

Shepherd. Barn-door fowl! Hoot awa! You maun hae a breed o' gem-birds. Nane better than the Lady-legg'd Reds. I ken the verra gem-eggs, at the first pree, frae your dung-hill—as different as a pine-apple and a fozy turnip.

North. The conversation has taken an unexpected turn, my dear Shepherd. I had intended keeping a few deer.

Shepherd. A few deevils! Na—na. You maun gang to the Thane's;[2] or if that princely chiel be in Embro' or Lunnon, to James Laidlaw's and Watty Bryden's, in Strathglass, if you want deer. Keep you to the How-towdies.

North. I hope, Mr Hogg, you will bring the mistress and the weans to the house-warming?

Shepherd. I'll do that, and mony mair besides them.—Whare the deevil's Mr Tickler?

North. Off. He pretended to go to the pump for an aquatic supply, but he long ere now has reached Southside.[3]

Shepherd. That's maist extraordinar. I could hae ta'en my Bible oath that I kept seeing him a' this time sitting right foreanent me, with his lang legs and nose, and een like daggers—but it must hae been ane o' Hibbert's phantasms—an idea has become more vivid than a present sensation. Is that philosophical language? What took him aff? I could sit for ever. Catch me breaking up the conviviality of the company. I'm just in grand spirits the nicht—come, here's an extempore lilt.

[1] An easy-tempered, somewhat slovenly female, is called in Scotland a *mawsie*.

[2] The Thane was the Earl of Fife, whose estates in Braemar abound in red deer. James Laidlaw and Walter Bryden were sheep-farmers in Strathglass. The former was the brother of William Laidlaw, Sir Walter Scott's friend and factor.

[3] Mr Robert Sym, of whom Timothy Tickler was in some respects the eidolon, resided in No. 20 George Square, on the *south side* of Edinburgh.

AIR, "*Whistle and I'll come to ye, my Lad.*"

1.

If e'er you would be a brave fellow, young man,
Beware of the Blue and the Yellow,[1] young man;
If ye wud be strang,
And wish to write lang,
Come join wi' the lads that get mellow, young man.
Like the crack o' a squib that has fa'en on, young man,
Compared wi' the roar o' a cannon, young man,
So is the Whig's blow
To the pith that's below
The beard o' auld Geordie Buchanan,[2] young man.

2.

I heard a bit bird in the braken, young man,
It sang till the Whigs were a' quaking, young man,
And aye the sad lay
Was, Alack for the day!
For the Blue and the Yellow's forsaken, young man.
The day is arrived that's nae joking, young man;
'Tis vain to be murmuring and mocking, young man:
A Whig may be leal,
But he'll never fight weel,
As lang as he dadds wi' a docken, young man.

3.

O wha wadna laugh at their capers, young man?
Like auld maidens fash'd wi' the vapours, young man,
We have turned them adrift
To their very last shift,
That's—*puffing the Radical Papers, young man.*
If ye wad hear tell o' their pingle,[3] young man,
Gae list the wee bird in the dingle, young man;
Its note o' despair,
Is sae loud in the air,
That the windows of heaven play jingle, young man.

4.

I'll give you a toast of the auldest, young man;
The loyal head ne'er was the cauldest, young man;
"Our King and his Throne,
Be his glory our own,"

[1] The "Blue and the Yellow" is the *Edinburgh Review.*
[2] The effigies of George Buchanan is the frontispiece to *Blackwood's Magazine.*
[3] *Pingle*—difficulty.

And the last of his days aye the bauldest, young man.—
But as for the loun that would hector, young man,
And pit us at odds wi' a lecture, young man,
May he dance cutty-mun,
Wi' his neb to the sun,
And his doup to the General Director,[1] young man.

North. A perfect Pistrucci!

Shepherd. Haud your tongue, and I'll sing you ane o' the bonniest sangs you ever heard in a' your born days. I dinna ken that I ever wrote a better ane mysel. It is by a friend o' mine—as yet an obscure man—Henry Riddell—t'ither day a shepherd like mysel—but now a student.

SONG.—*To the Air of "Lord Lennox."*

1.

When the glen all is still, save the stream from the fountain;
When the shepherd has ceased o'er the heather to roam;
And the wail of the plover awakes on the mountain,
Inviting his love to return to her home;
There meet me, my Mary, adown by the wild-wood,
Where violets and daisies sleep saft in the dew;
Our bliss shall be sweet as the visions of childhood,
And pure as the heavens' own orient blue.

2.

Thy locks shall be braided with pearls of the gloaming;
Thy cheek shall be fann'd by the breeze of the lawn;
The Angel of Love shall be 'ware of thy coming,
And hover around thee till rise of the dawn.
O, Mary! no transports of Heaven's decreeing
Can equal the joys of such meeting to me;
For the light of thine eye is the home of my being,
And my soul's fondest hopes are all gather'd to thee.

North. Beautiful, indeed, James—Mr Riddell is a man of much merit, and deserves encouragement. The verses on the death of Byron, published a week ago by my friend John

[1] This is a mysterious allusion to that part of the town where executions take place.—*C. N.* Mr David Bridges, cloth-merchant, had a shop in the vicinity of the spot where persons "dance cutty-mun wi' their nebs to the sun," or, in plain language, are hanged. From a taste which he supposed himself to have in painting, he was dubbed by the *Blackwood* wits "General Director of the Fine Arts in Scotland."

Anderson, show feeling and originality. But would you believe it, my beloved Shepherd, my eyes are gathering straws.

Re-enter TICKLER.

Shepherd. There's Harry Longleggs.

Tickler. I felt somewhat hungry so long after supper, and having detected a round of beef in a cupboard, I cut off a segment of a circle, and have been making myself comfortable at the solitary kitchen-fire.

North (*rising*). Come away, my young friend — Give me your arm, James. That will do, Shepherd—softly, slowly, my dearest Hogg—no better supporter than the author of the *Queen's Wake*.

Shepherd. What a gran' ticker is Mr Ambrose's clock! It beats like the strong, regular pulse of a healthy house. Whirr! Whirr! Whirr! Hear till her gee'ing the warning. I'll just finish these twa half tumblers o' porter, and the wee drappie in the bit blue noseless juggy. As sure's death, it has chapped Three. The lass that sits up at the Harrow[1] 'll hae gane to the garret, and how'll I get in?

(*Sus canit*).—O let me in this ae night,
This ae ae ae night, &c.

With a' our daffin, we are as sober as three judges with double gowns.

Tickler. As sober!

Shepherd. Dear me, Mr North, what's that in your coat-pouch?

North (*subridens illi*). Two numbers of Maga, you dog. The London trashery has had hitherto the start of me in the market.[2] Our next Number is for April—and April showers bring May-flowers.

Mr AMBROSE *looks out in his nightcap—wishing good-night with his usual suavity—Exeunt*—TICKLER *in advance—and* NORTH *leaning on the* SHEPHERD.

[1] The sign of the hostelrie near the Grassmarket where Hogg resided when in Edinburgh.

[2] Previous to this time the London periodicals had the start of *Blackwood's Magazine*, inasmuch as they were published at the beginning of the month, while *Blackwood* did not appear until the end of it. Blackwood brought up his lee-way on the 28th of February 1825, by putting forth two numbers at once—the one for February, and the other for March. These were the two numbers which North had in his coat-pocket.

II.

(SEPTEMBER 1825.)

Blue Parlour.—North *and* Tickler.

North. With what admirable ingenuity hath our Ambrose contrived to procure a perpetual play of Zephyr, even during the summer noon, in this Sanctum Sanctorum!

Tickler. What a scientific thorough-draught! How profound these shadows! Not a leaf is withered on that beautiful geranium! Never was that flowering myrtle more "brightly, deeply, beautifully green." Week after week that carnation tree displays new orbs of crimson glory. Saw ye ever, North, such a tiger-lily, so wildly, fiercely beautiful, like its forest brother, the animal that terrifies the desert with his glittering and gorgeous motion, as he bounds over brake and jungle in famine or in play?

North. Timothy, Timothy, Timothy! First Timothy?

Tickler. Too poetical? Why, that red champagne has stirred up all the ethereal particles that mysteriously constitute the soul; and, as Jeffrey said to Coleridge, "Why, sir, my whole talk is poetry."

North. Whoever wishes to know what poetry is, to know it clearly, distinctly, and permanently, let him read Barry Cornwall's article thereon in the last Number of the *Edinburgh Review*.[1]

Tickler. That young gentleman deserves a dressing at your hands or mine, North, for he often runs a-muck now; not in the Malay, however, but Cockney fashion, and the pen must be wrested out of his lily hand.

North. The image is not unamusing; a slight, slim poetaster mincing a-muck among the great English bards! I love

[1] No. LXXXIII.

Barry, for he writes pretty—very pretty verses—and has an eye for the beautiful; but in the character of critic . . . .

Tickler. He courts the world's applause, by endeavouring to imitate Leigh Hunt, Hazlitt, Jeffrey, the *London Magazine*, himself, Johnny Keates, and the morning papers; and in such slang he jargons the characters of Shakespeare and Milton. It is indeed despicable to see the old Blue and Yellow reduced to such drivelling as this;—but what are you reading, North?

North. The account of the Lion-fight at Warwick; a most brutal business—hideous and loathsome. But why confuse such infamous cruelty with such a cheerful pastime as pugilism?[1] Would you believe it, that the editor of the *New Times* has discontinued those admirable accounts of all the great fights that made his paper as much prized in the sporting as it has long been in the political and fashionable world? I do not find that he has shut his columns to those grossly indecent quack advertisements that render newspapers unfit to lie on the breakfast-table of an honest family. Is this consistent?

Tickler. Very silly. By so doing, he disappoints a vast number of his subscribers. What right has he to disappoint five hundred country gentlemen, all anxious to know the character and result of any battle?

North. None. They take his paper, to be sure, for other and higher reasons; but they are entitled to find in its columns full and particular accounts of all such contests,—for, right or wrong, they form part of our national pastimes, create a prodigious interest among all classes, and a man looks and feels like a ninny on going into company in utter ignorance of that event which furnishes the sole conversation of that one day. I trust this hint will be taken.

Tickler. Confound all cruelty to animals!—but I much question the efficacy of law to protect the inferior creation against the human. Let that protection be found in the moral indignation of the people. That Irish jackass, Martin,[2]

[1] "After supper Dr Johnson said, 'I am sorry that prize-fighting has gone out; every art should be preserved, and the art of defence is surely important.'"—BOSWELL'S *Life*, ch. xxxix.

[2] Richard Martin, M.P. for Galway, carried through Parliament a bill for the prevention and punishment of cruelty to animals, and sedulously watched its enforcement, by infesting the police-offices with informations. In *Blackwood's Magazine* for October 1825, the vehement expressions here directed against the Irish member are qualified and explained.

throws an air of ridicule over the whole matter by his insufferable idiotism. I hope to see his skull, thick as it is, cracked one of these days; for that vulgar and angry gabble with which he weekly infests the police-offices of the metropolis, is a greater outrage to humanity than any fifty blows ever inflicted on the snout of pig, or the buttocks of beeve; blows which, in one and the same breath, the blustering and blundering blockhead would fain prosecute, punish, and pardon.

North. It is not possible to define cruelty to animals, so as to bring it within the salutary operation of law. That being the case, there should be no law on the subject. I am an old, weak man, now, but I was once young and strong; and this fist, Timothy, now with difficulty folded into a bunch of fives, —for these chalk-stones forbid,—has levelled many a brute in the act of unmercifully beating his horse, his ass, or his wife. Every man ought to take the law into his own hands on such occasions. Thus only can the inferior animals walk the streets of London in any degree of security.

Tickler. Pray, Mr Richard Martin, did you ever try to drive a pig? or to keep a flock of sheep, or a drove of cattle together, in the midst of the riot, tumult, and confusion of Smithfield? It is no such easy job, I can tell you; and nothing short of a most impertinent and provoking puppy must that person be, who stops short a drover in all his agonies of exasperation, for merely banging the hide of an over-fed ox, about to join the colours of another regiment.

North. Why don't they murder him at once?

Tickler. Oh! he cannot expect to sit in another Parliament. I presume you know that he is to be Chancellor of the University of London?

North. I do. University of London! With what an air of pride will a young man look about him, in a company of poor Oxonians and Cantabs, who may have just finished his education in the University of London![1]

Tickler. Tims,[2] I am told, is to be a Professor. Yet, joking

[1] There are three collegiate institutions in the metropolis—first, University College, London, founded in 1825, to which reference is made in the text; secondly, King's College, London, established in 1829; and thirdly, the University of London, established in 1836.

[2] The writers in *Blackwood's Magazine* had affixed the harmless nickname of "Tims" to Mr P. G. Patmore, author of *Letters on England, by Victoire Count de Soligny*, 1823; and *My Friends and Acquaintances*, 1854.

apart, I am sorry there is to be no theological chair. I had intended occupying it, and had even sketched out a course of lectures; but understanding that ODoherty was a candidate, I retired before the claims of the Adjutant.[1]

North. The Adjutant! Do you mean to tell me that the Standard-Bearer is a Unitarian? Impossible! ODoherty could never have intended to accept the chair.

Tickler. On the whole it is better, perhaps, that he is to be appointed Professor of Gymnastics. Clias[2] does not mean to oppose him; and therefore, for the Adjutant's sake, let us drink success to this institution:—"Sir Morgan ODoherty, and the University of London;" *with all the honours. Hip, hip, hip—&c. &c. &c.*

North. Young persons, my good friend, will, no doubt, get information of various kinds at the said London University; but it will always be a vulgar, coarsish sort of an academe. True it is, that the expense of a complete and gentlemanly education at Oxford or Cambridge is a serious thing, and must deter many parents from sending their sons thither; but such education as this metropolitan school will supply, never will be considered as a satisfactory substitute for the other, either by the heads of families, or the young gentlemen themselves; and it is plain that the students must be of a low grade in society. Be it so: it is well. Let its real character be understood, and many of the objections to the scheme will fall to the ground; just as many of the expectations of its utility will do, now absurdly exaggerated and misrepresented.

Tickler. No Divinity—no Polite Literature—no Classics! —What a Menagerie it will be of Bears and Monkeys! a nursery for contributors to the *Westminster Review.*

North. Pray, Tickler, have you read Milton's Treatise on Christianity?[3]

Tickler. I have; and feel disposed to agree with him in his doctrine of polygamy. For many years I lived very

[1] The late William Maginn, LL.D., dealt out his pasquinades and *facetiæ* in *Blackwood's Magazine,* and elsewhere, under the name of Morgan ODoherty.

[2] Captain P. H. Clias, whose work, entitled *An Elementary Course of Gymnastic Exercises,* was reviewed by Professor Wilson in *Blackwood's Magazine* (No. CXV.), died at Berne in 1854, and is reported to have bequeathed his skeleton to the museum in that town, as evidence of the beneficial effects of judicious gymnastic training.

[3] At that time recently discovered.

comfortably without a wife; and since the 1820, I have been a monogamist. But I confess that there is a sameness in that system. I should like much to try polygamy for a few years. I wish Milton had explained the duties of a polygamist; for it is possible that they may be of a very intricate, complicated, and unbounded nature, and that such an accumulation of private business might be thrown on one's hands, that it could not be in the power of an elderly gentleman to overtake it; occupied, too, as he might be, as in my own case, in contributing to the Periodical Literature of the age.

North. Sir, the system would not be found to work well in this climate. Milton was a great poet; but a bad divine, and a miserable politician.

Tickler. How can that be?—Wordsworth says that a great poet must be great in all things.

North. Wordsworth often writes like an idiot; and never more so than when he said of Milton, "his soul was like a star, and dwelt apart!" For it dwelt in tumult, and mischief, and rebellion. Wordsworth is, in all things, the reverse of Milton—a good man, and a bad poet.

Tickler. What!—That Wordsworth whom Maga cries up as the Prince of Poets?

North. Be it so; I must humour the fancies of some of my friends. But had that man been a great poet, he would have produced a deep and lasting impression on the mind of England; whereas his verses are becoming less and less known every day, and he is, in good truth, already one of the illustrious obscure.

Tickler. I never thought him more than a very ordinary man—with some imagination, certainly, but with no grasp of understanding, and apparently little acquainted with the history of his kind. My God! to compare such a writer with Scott and Byron!

North. And yet, with his creed, what might not a great poet have done?—That the language of poetry is but the language of strong human passion!—That in the great elementary principles of thought and feeling, common to all the race, the subject-matter of poetry is to be sought and found!—That enjoyment and suffering, as they wring and crush, or expand and elevate, men's hearts, are the sources of song!—And what, pray, has he made out of this true and philosophical creed?—A few ballads (pretty at the best), two or

three moral fables, some natural description of scenery, and half-a-dozen narratives of common distress or happiness. Not one single character has he created—not one incident—not one tragical catastrophe. He has thrown no light on man's estate here below; and Crabbe, with all his defects, stands immeasurably above Wordsworth as the Poet of the Poor.

Tickler. Good. And yet the youngsters, in that absurd Magazine of yours, set him up to the stars as their idol, and kiss his very feet, as if the toes were of gold.

North. Well, well; let them have their own way awhile. I confess that the "Excursion" is the worst poem, of any character, in the English language. It contains about two hundred sonorous lines, some of which appear to be fine, even in the sense, as well as the sound. The remaining seven thousand three hundred are quite ineffectual. Then, what labour the builder of that lofty rhyme must have undergone! It is, in its own way, a small Tower of Babel, and all built by a single man!

Tickler. Wipe your forehead, North; for it is indeed a most perspiring thought. I do not know whether my gallantry blinds me, but I prefer much of the female to the male poetry of the day.

North. O thou Polygamist!

Tickler. There is Joanna Baillie. Is there not more genius, passion, poetry, in the tragedy of *Count Basil*, than in any book of Wordsworth?

North. Ten times.

Tickler. There is Mrs Hemans. Too fond, certes, is she of prattling about Greece and Rome, and of being classical, which no lady can hope to be who has never been at one of the English public schools, and sat upon the fifth form. But is there not often a rich glow of imagery in her compositions, fine feelings and fancies, and an unconstrained and even triumphant flow of versification which murmurs poetry?

North. There is.

Tickler. Is not L. E. L.[1] a child of genius, as well as of the *Literary Gazette;* and does she not throw over her most impassioned strains of love and rapture a delicate and gentle spirit from the recesses of her own pure and holy woman's heart?

North. She does.

[1] Miss L. E. Landon, afterwards Mrs Maclean: born in 1802—died in 1838, at or near Sierra Leone.

Tickler. And was not Tighe an angel, if ever there was one on earth, beautiful, airy, and evanescent as her own immortal Psyche?

North. She was.

Tickler. And what the devil, then, would you be at with your great bawling He-Poets from the Lakes, who go round and round about, strutting upon nothing, like so many turkey-cocks gobbling with a long red pendant at their noses, and frightening away the fair and lovely swans as they glide down the waters of immortality?

North. With Fahrenheit at 80 in the shade, I praise the poetry of no man.[1] You have *carte blanche* to abuse everybody, Tickler, till the thermometer is less ambitious.

Tickler. Wordsworth is a poet—but unluckily is a weak man. His imagination shows him fine sights, but his intellect knows not how to deal with them, so that they evanish in glittering and gorgeous evaporation.

North. Just so, Tickler—and then how ludicrously he overrates his own powers. This we all do; but Wordsworth's pride is like that of a straw-crowned king in Bedlam. For example, he indited some silly lines to a hedge-sparrow's nest with five eggs, and, years afterwards, in a fit of exultation, told the world, in another poem equally childish, that the "Address to the Sparrow" was "one strain that will not die!" Ha! ha! ha! Can that be a great man?

Tickler. Had that man in youth become the member of any profession (which all poor men are bound to do), he would soon have learned in the tussle to rate his powers more truly. How such a man as Jeffrey, with his endless volubility of ingenious argumentation, would have squabashed him before a jury! Suppose him Attorney-general in the Queen's trial, stammering before Brougham, who kept lowering upon him with that cadaverous and cruel countenance, on a sudden instinct with a hellish scorn! Or opposed in Parliament to the rapier of Canning, that even while glancing brightly before the eye, has already inflicted twenty disabling wounds! Or editor of a Poetical, Philosophical, and Political Journal,

[1] "With Fahrenheit at 80 in the shade, I praise the poetry of no man." Christopher was very intolerant of heat; and his remark accounts, humorously enough, for the somewhat capricious and disparaging tone of criticism which pervades this dialogue.

and under the influence of a malignant star, opposed, *vi et armis*, to Christopher North, the Victor in a Thousand Fields!

North. Ay, ay, Tickler—my dear Tickler—He would have found his level then—but his excessive vanity . . . .

Tickler. Contrasted with the unassuming, and indeed retiring modesty—I might say bashfulness—of your mind and manners, sir, the arrogance of the stamp-master . . . .

North. Hush—no illiberal allusion to a man's trade.

Tickler. I ask pardon. No person more illiberal on this very point than our lyrical ballad-monger. His whole writings, in verse and prose, are full of sneers at almost every profession but his own—and that being the case . . . .

North. Scott's poetry puzzles me—it is often very bad.

Tickler. Very.

North. Except when his martial soul is up, he is but a tame and feeble writer. His versification in general flows on easily—smoothly—almost sonorously—but seldom or never with impetuosity or grandeur. There is no strength, no felicity in his diction—and the substance of his poetry is neither rich nor rare. The atmosphere is becoming every moment more oppressive. How stands the Therm.?

Tickler. Ninety. But then when his martial soul is up—and up it is at sight of a spear-point or a pennon—then indeed you hear the true poet of chivalry. What care I, Kit, for all his previous drivelling—if drivelling it be—and God forbid I should deny drivelling to any poet, ancient or modern—for now he makes my very soul to burn within me,—and, coward and civilian though I be,—yes, a most intense and insuperable coward, prizing life and limb beyond all other earthly possessions, and loath to shed one single drop of blood either for my King or country,—yet such is the trumpet-power of the song of that son of genius, that I start from my old elbow-chair, up with the poker, tongs, or shovel, no matter which, and flourishing it round my head, cry,

"Charge, Chester, charge! On, Stanley, on!"

and then, dropping my voice, and returning to my padded bottom, whisper,

"Were the last words of Marmion!"

North. Bravo—bravo—bravo!

Tickler. I care not one single curse for all the criticism that

ever was canted, or decanted, or recanted. Neither does the world. The world takes a poet as it finds him, and seats him above or below the salt. The world is as obstinate as a million mules, and will not turn its head on one side or another for all the shouting of the critical population that ever was shouted. It is very possible that the world is a bad judge. Well, then—appeal to posterity, and be hanged to you—and posterity will affirm the judgment, with costs.

North. How you can jabber away so, in such a temperature as this, confounds me. You are indeed a singular old man.

Tickler. Therefore I say that Scott is a Homer of a poet, and so let him doze when he has a mind to it; for no man I know is better entitled to an occasional half-canto of slumber.

North. Did you ever meet any of the Lake-Poets in private society?

Tickler. Five or six times. Wordsworth has a grave, solemn, pedantic, awkward, out-of-the-worldish look about him, that rather puzzles you as to his probable profession, till he begins to speak—and then, to be sure, you set him down at once for a Methodist preacher.

North. I have seen Chantrey's bust.

Tickler. The bust flatters his head, which is not intellectual. The forehead is narrow, and the skull altogether too scanty. Yet the baldness, the gravity, and the composure, are impressive, and, on the whole, not unpoetical. The eyes are dim and thoughtful, and a certain sweetness of smile occasionally lightens up the strong lines of his countenance with an expression of courteousness and philanthropy.

North. Is he not extremely eloquent?

Tickler. Far from it. He labours like a whale spouting—his voice is wearisomely monotonous—he does not know when to have done with a subject—oracularly announces perpetual truisms—never hits the nail on the head—and leaves you amazed with all that needless pother, which the simple bard opines to be eloquence, and which passes for such with his Cockney idolators, and his catechumens at Ambleside and Keswick.

North. Not during dinner, surely?

Tickler. Yes—during breakfast, lunch, dinner, tea, and supper,—every intermediate moment,—nor have I any doubt that he proses all night long in his sleep.

North. Shocking indeed. In conversation, the exchange should be at par. That is the grand secret. Nor should any Christian ever exceed the maximum of three consecutive sentences—except in an anecdote.

Tickler. O merciful heavens! my dear North—What eternal talkers most men are now-a-days—all at it in a party at once—each farthing candle anxious to shine forth with its own vile wavering wick—tremulously apprehensive of snuffers—and stinking away after expiration in the socket!

North. Bad enough in town, but worse, far worse, in country places.

Tickler. The surgeon! The dominie! The old minister's assistant and successor! The president of the Speculative Society! Two landscape-painters! The rejected contributor to *Blackwood!* The agricultural reporter of the county! The surveyor! Captain Campbell! The Laird, his son! The stranger gentleman on a tour! The lecturer on an orrery! The poet about to publish by subscription! The person from Pitkeathly! The man of the house himself—My God! his wife and daughters! and the widow, the widow! I can no more, the widow, the widow, the widow! (*Sinks back in his chair.*)

North. I have heard Coleridge. That man is entitled to speak on till Doomsday—or rather the genius within him—for he is inspired. Wind him up, and away he goes, discoursing most excellent music—without a discord—full, ample, inexhaustible, serious and divine!

Tickler. Add him to my list—and the band of instrumental music is complete.

North. What stuff is spoken about the oratory of pulpit and parliament!

Tickler. Brougham is a volcano—an eruption—a devouring flame—a storm—a whirlwind—a cataract—a torrent—a sea—thunder and earthquake. You might apply the same terms, with the same truth, to a Billingsgate fishwife.

North. Brougham's invective is formidable chiefly for its vulgarity. One hates, loaths, fears to be pelted with the mud and missiles of an infuriated demagogue—just as a gentleman declines the proffered combat with a carman, although conscious that in three rounds he would leave the ruffian senseless in the ring.

Tickler. That sometimes occurs—as in the case of Canning.

North. The straight hitting of the Foreign Secretary soon dorses your round-about hand-over-head millers, like Harry Brougham.

Tickler. Yet how that outrageous violence and fury, arms aloft, eyes agog, cheeks convulsed, and lips quivering, passes with the multitude for demonstration of strength and science!

North. Brougham never fights at points—he throws away his blows—and beyond all the other men, lays himself open to fatal punishment, although he has weight, length, and reach, and generally enters the ring in good condition, and after long and severe training, yet has he lost every battle. His backers are never confident—yet in a casual turn-up, it must be allowed that he is an ugly customer.

Tickler. Notwithstanding the truth of all this, I am a great admirer of Brougham. He is unquestionably a man of great and versatile talents.

North. Yes—and to hear his lickspittles speak, you would think that a man of great and versatile talents was a miracle; whereas there are some thousands of them publicly acknowledged in England at this day. We hear of his wonderful literary talents—wherein exhibited?

Tickler. The *Edinburgh Review.*

North. Very well—many able papers in the *Edinburgh Review* no doubt—which are his? Let us suppose all of them, and that the trash is Jeffrey's, Smith's, Mackintosh's, &c.; are the best of those papers astounding, prodigious, miraculous, prophetic of the Millennium? I read them without awe—my hair does not rise—my knees do not tremble—no cold sweat overspreads my aged frame. I read on—on—on—am pleased to see intuitively the fallacy of all he writes—and fall asleep with a calm conscience.

Tickler. He is a great mathematician.

North. So is his brother Billy, who was to have beaten Joshua King at Cambridge, and come forth from the Senate-house senior Wrangler, with "Incomparabilis" at his name. But on the day of trial he was found wanting—and showed himself no mathematician at all, although he too, it is said, writes his scientific articles in the *Edinburgh Review.* Yes! he is the Euclid of the *Edinburgh.*

Tickler. His Colonial Policy?

North. Speeches in the Speculative Society, and trial-essays for the *Edinburgh Review*—a foolish farrago—although on some subjects I prefer the ignorant sincerity of the boy there exhibited, to the instructed hypocrisy of the man in his late bellowings on Slavery and the Blacks.

Tickler. Then what say you to his Glasgow affair?[1]

North. Why, as to his Inaugural Discourse, it is far from being a bad performance, but stiff, pedantic, and cumbrous. It was written, he tells the world, on the Northern Circuit; and his childish sycophant in the *Edinburgh Review* opens his mouth to a dangerous extent at this wonder of wonders, braying, that "it sounds like monstrous and shocking exaggeration, or fabulous invention."

Tickler. The short and the long of it is, then, that, when inquired into, Henry Brougham's literary and scientific pretensions sink into absolute nothingness, and that there are at this moment at least fifty thousand men in England equal to this prodigy in all the attainments of scholarship, and certainly not fewer than ten thousand his superior, incomparably, both in argument and capacity?

North. Doubtless, Tickler,—add his Bar practice and Parliamentary howling, and still he can be accounted for without the aid of "fabulous invention."

Tickler. He is a first-rate fellow in his way, and that I can say, without "monstrous or shocking exaggeration." But his stature does not reach the sky, although his head is frequently in the clouds. Copley[2] is his master.

North. That is a capital article on the Drama in the last number of Maga. It cuts up your dogmata, in your sprightly review of Doubleday's Babington, with civility and discretion.

Tickler. Indeed! What I asserted in my sprightly review of Doubleday's Babington was simply this, that it was easier for a man of great poetical genius to write dramatic poetry than any other kind. In the course of my very sprightly review I remarked, that "with a powerful intellect, a vivid imagination, and a keen insight into human nature, particularly into its passions, where is the prodigious difficulty of writing a good tragedy?"

North. Why, I confess I see none.

[1] Henry Brougham was Lord-Rector of the University of Glasgow in 1824.

[2] Afterwards Lord Lyndhurst.

Tickler. But hear our friend.—"To this I answer, None whatever; and when we shall find first-rate intellect, imagination, and knowledge of human passion combined, we shall have found the true writer of tragedy, and the true Phœnix besides."

North. And what say you in reply?

Tickler. I say, that I cannot but wonder at such a sentence from so clever a correspondent. Why, are not all great poets that ever existed such men as I have described? There was no description of a Phœnix, but of any one of some hundreds, or perhaps thousands, or tens of thousands of men and Christians. I did not argue the question at any great length; but I made out my point unanswerably, that epic poetry (for example) was more difficult than dramatic,—and that——

North. Come, come—nobody remembers one single word that either of you have said upon that, or any other subject. It is pleasant to know how immediately everything said or done in this world is forgotten. Murder a novel, or a man, or a poem, or a child—forge powers of attorney without cessation during the prime of life, till old maids beyond all computation have been sold unsuspectingly out of the stocks in every country village in England—for a lustre furnish Balaam to a London magazine, at thirty shillings per bray — in short, let any man commit any enormity, and it is forgotten before the first of the month! Who remembers anything but the bare names—and these indistinctly—of Thurtell, and Hunt, and Fauntleroy, and Hazlitt, and Tims, and Soames, and Southeran. Soap-bubbles all—blown, burst, vanished, and forgotten.

Tickler. Why, you might almost venture to republish Maga herself in numbers, under the smirk of a New Series. I know a worthy and able minister of our church, who has been preaching (and long may he preach it) the self-same sermon for upwards of forty years. About the 1802 I began to suspect him; but having then sat below him only for some dozen years or so, I could not, of course, in a matter of so much delicacy, dare trust to my very imperfect memory. During the Whig ministry of 1806, my attention was strongly riveted to the "practical illustrations," and I could have sworn to the last twenty minutes of his discourse, as to the voice of a friend familiar in early youth. About the time your Magazine first dawned on the world, my belief of its identity extended

to the whole discourse; and the good old man himself, in the delight of his heart, confessed to me the truth a few Sabbaths after the Chaldee.

North. Come, now, tell me truth, have you ever palmed off any part of it upon me in the shape of an article?

Tickler. Never, 'pon honour; but you shall get the whole of it some day, as a Number One; for, now that he has got an assistant and successor, the sermon is seldom employed, and he has bequeathed it me in a codicil to his will.

North. Tickler, you think yourself a good reader—there is Southey's new poem, "The Tale of Paraguay." Spout.

Tickler. I read well—although hardly a John Kemble or a James Ballantyne. I do not read according to rules, but I follow my feelings, and they never mislead me. Accordingly, I never read the same composition in the same way, yet each way is the right one. But judge for yourself. . . . Give me Southey. . . . . (*Rises and reads.*)

"He was a man of rarest qualities,
Who to this barbarous region had confined
A spirit with the learned and the wise
Worthy to take its place, and from mankind
Receive their homage, to the immortal mind
Paid in its just inheritance of fame.
But he to humbler thoughts his heart inclined;
From Gratz amid the Styrian hills he came,
And Dobrizhoffer was the good man's honour'd name.

"It was his evil fortune to behold
The labours of his painful life destroy'd;
His flock which he had brought within the fold
Dispersed; the work of ages render'd void,
And all of good that Paraguay enjoy'd
By blind and suicidal power o'erthrown.
So he the years of his old age employ'd,
A faithful chronicler, in handing down
Names which he loved, and things well worthy to be known.

"And, thus when exiled from the dear-loved scene,
In proud Vienna he beguiled the pain
Of sad remembrance: and the Empress Queen,
That great Teresa, she did not disdain
In gracious mood sometimes to entertain

Discourse with him both pleasurable and sage;
And sure a willing ear she well might deign
To one whose tales may equally engage
The wondering mind of youth, the thoughtful heart of age.

"But of his native speech because well-nigh
Disuse in him forgetfulness had wrought,
In Latin he composed his history;
A garrulous, but a lively tale, and fraught
With matter of delight and food for thought.
And if he could in Merlin's glass have seen
By whom his tomes to speak our tongue were taught,[1]
The old man would have felt as pleased, I ween,
As when he won the ear of that great Empress Queen.

"Little he deem'd when with his Indian band
He through the wilds set forth upon his way,
A Poet then unborn, and in a land
Which had proscribed his order, should one day
Take up from thence his moralising lay,
And shape a song that, with no fiction drest,
Should to his worth its grateful tribute pay,
And sinking deep in many an English breast,
Foster that faith divine that keeps the heart at rest."

North. Very bad—very bad.

Tickler. I offer to read you for a rump and dozen. Sir, which of us call you bad—the poet or the spouter?

North. Both, both—bad, bald, mean, and miserable!

Tickler. Bald!—Can't help that. Would you have me wear a wig?—But here's at it again.—(*Reads.*)

"The Moon had gather'd oft her monthly store
Of light, and oft in darkness left the sky,
Since Monnema a growing burthen bore
Of life and hope. The appointed weeks go by;
And now her hour is come, and none is nigh
To help: but human help she needed none.
A few short throes endured with scarce a cry,
Upon the bank she laid her new-born son,
Then slid into the stream, and bathed, and all was done.

[1] Dobrizhoffer's *History of the Abipones,* was translated into English by a daughter of S. T. Coleridge.

"Might old observances have there been kept,
Then should the husband to that pensile bed,
Like one exhausted with the birth have crept,
And laying down in feeble guise his head,
For many a day been nursed and dieted
With tender care, to chiding mothers due.
Certes a custom strange, and yet far spread
Through many a savage tribe, howe'er it grew,
And once in the old world known as widely as the new.

"This could not then be done; he might not lay
The bow and those unerring shafts aside:
Nor through the appointed weeks forego the prey,
Still to be sought amid those regions wide,
None being there who should the while provide
That lonely household with their needful food;
So still Quiara through the forest plied
His daily task, and in the thickest wood
Still laid his snares for birds, and still the chace pursued."

North. Conceived and brought forth in the true spirit of a howdie![1]—

"Then slid into the stream, and *bathed, and all was done!*"

Tickler. Look at the passage, North, with your own eyes. You see it—so do I. Shall I ring the bell for Ambrose and other witnesses?

North. "What is writ is writ." But oh! how unlike the spirit of Byron! It is indeed pitiable.

Tickler. What the devil are you whimpering at?—Not a poet living who has not indulged in his drivel.

North. Oh! not surely to that degree!

Tickler. Yes; beyond the superlative. Then hear the people in Parliament. What ludicrous pomposity in the enunciation of old, decrepid, emaciated truths, walking arm-in-arm with skeleton falsehoods! Are there, I ask you, six men in the House of Commons who could support a part in our *Noctes Ambrosianæ?*

North. I intend shortly to try. We shall then see of what metal they are made.

Tickler. Who are the first men in England?—The spirits of the age?

[1] *Howdie*—midwife.

North. I know none superior to our two selves. The world tires speedily of everything set before it, except The Magazine. All the other periodicals seem to sicken their subscribers. To conduct the state is, I verily believe, much easier than to conduct *Ebony*. The state goes on of itself. All that the ministry is expected to do, is not to stop the state. But we carry the Magazine on. A national bankruptcy would be nothing in comparison to our stopping payment.

Tickler. I know not whether your death, or that of the Great Unknown, would most fatally eclipse the gaiety of nations.

North. Mine.

Tickler. List!—I hear Mullion, Hogg, and ODoherty.

(*Door burst open, and they enter.*)

III.

(OCTOBER 1825.)

North. Let us have some sensible conversation, Timothy. At our time of life such colloquy is becoming.

Tickler. Why the devil would you not come to Dalnacardoch?[1] Glorious guffawing all night, and immeasurable murder all day. Twenty-seven brace of birds, nine hares, three roes, and a red deer, stained the heather on the Twelfth, beneath my single-barrelled Joe—not to mention a pair of patriarchal ravens, and the Loch-Ericht eagle, whose leg was broken by the Prince when hiding in the moor of Rannoch.

North. Why kill the royal bird?

Tickler. In self defence. It bore down upon Sancho like a sunbeam from its eyrie on the cliff of Snows, and it would have broken his back with one stroke of its wing, had I not sent a ball right through its heart. It went up, with a yell, a hundred fathom into the clear blue air; and then, striking a green knoll in the midst of the heather, bounded down the rocky hill-side, and went shivering and whizzing along the black surface of a tarn, till it lay motionless in a huge heap among the water-lilies.

North. Lost?

Tickler. I stripped instanter—six feet four and three quarters *in puris naturalibus*—and out-Byroning Byron, shot, in twenty seconds, a furlong across the Fresh. Grasping the bird of Jove in my right, with my left I rowed my airy state towards the spot where I had left my breeches and other habiliments. Espying a trimmer, I seized it in my mouth, and on relanding at a small natural pier, as I hope to be shaved, lo! a pike of twenty-pound standing, with a jaw like an alligator,

[1] A shooting quarter in the highlands of Perthshire, occupied in the summer of 1825 by some friends of Professor Wilson.

and reaching from my hip to my instep, smote the heather, like a flail, into a shower of blossoms.

North. Was there a cloud of witnesses?

Tickler. To be sure there was. A hundred stills beheld me from the mountain-sides. Shepherd and smuggler cheered me like voices in the sky; and the old genius of the solitary place rustled applause through the reeds and rushes, and birch-trees among the rocks—paced up and down the shore in triumph . . . . . .

North. What a subject for the painter! Oh! that Sir Thomas Lawrence,[1] or our own John Watson,[2] had been there to put you on canvass! Or, shall I rather say, would that Chantrey had been by to study you for immortal marble!

Tickler. Braced by the liquid plunge, I circled the tarn at ten miles an hour. Unconsciously I had taken my Manton into my hand—and unconsciously reloaded—when, just as I was clearing the feeder-stream, not less than five yards across, up springs a red-deer, who, at the death of the eagle, had cowered down in the brake, and wafted away his antlers in the direction of Benvoirlich. We were both going at the top of our speed when I fired, and the ball piercing his spine, the magnificent creature sunk down, and died almost without a convulsion.

North. Red-deer, eagle, and pike, all dead as mutton!

Tickler. I sat down upon the forehead, resting an arm on each antler—Sancho sitting with victorious eyes on the carcass. I sent him off to the tarn-side for my pocket-pistol, charged with Glenlivet, No. 5. In a few minutes he returned, and crouched down with an air of mortification at my feet.

North. Ho! ho! the fairies have spirited away your nether integuments!

Tickler. Not an article to be seen!—save and except my shoes!—Jacket, waistcoat, flannel shirt, breeches, all melted away with the mountain dew. There was I like Adam in Paradise, or,

> "Lady of the Mere,
> Sole-sitting by the shores of old romance."

North. Did not the dragon-flies attack you—the winged ants—and the wasp of the desert?

[1] Sir Thomas Lawrence died in 1830.

[2] Afterwards Sir John Watson Gordon, President of the Royal Scottish Academy.

Tickler. A figure moved along the horizon—a female figure —a Light and Shadow of Celtic Life—and, as I am a Christian, I beheld my buckskin breeches dangling over her shoulders. I neared upon the chace, but saw that Malvina was making for a morass. Whiz went a ball within a stride of her petticoats, and she deflected her course towards a wood on the right. She dropped our breeches. I literally leaped into them; and, like Apollo in pursuit of Daphne, pursued my impetuous career.

North. To Diana! to Diana ascends the virgin's prayer!

Tickler. Down went, one after the other, jacket, waistcoat, flannel shirt,—would you believe it, her own blue linsey-woolsey petticoat. Thus lightened, she bounded over the little knolls like a bark over Sicilian seas; in ten minutes she had fairly run away from me hull-down, and her long yellow hair, streaming like a pendant, disappeared in the forest.

North. What have you done with the puir lassie's petticoat?

Tickler. I sent it to my friend Dr M'Culloch to lie among his other relics.

North. The Doctor is a clever man; but those four volumes[1] of his are too heavy a load for the shoulders of the public. Besides, the Doctor does not always speak the truth. You have perhaps seen the *Examination*[2] of his Tour?

Tickler. Shrewd, searching, sarcastic, severe. The examiner—said to be a literary gentleman of the name of Brown —gets the Doctor's head into Chancery in the first round, and continues at grievous head-work during the contest, which is short, the Doctor slipping through his arms exhausted. An ugly customer!

North. People writing up books from old worm-eaten weather-stained journals, must fall into many blunders—misstatements—misrepresentations. The examiner charges the Doctor with wilful falsehood—and as he backs his charge with proofs most ably led, the Doctor's character as a man of veracity does at this present moment stand in need of vigorous vindication.

[1] *The Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland.* By JOHN M'CULLOCH, M.D.

[2] *A Critical Examination of Dr M'Culloch's Work on the Highlands of Scotland.* By JAMES BROWN, LL.D., Advocate, author of *The History of the Highlands and Highland Clans.*

Tickler. One piece of insolence he never can do away with. Throughout all the four volumes, he addresses himself with the most nauseating familiarity to Sir Walter Scott, as if the illustrious Baronet had been his bosom-friend. "You and I, Sir Walter," is the order of the page.

North. That would sicken a horse.

Tickler. In narrating conversations with Highlanders, the aim of which dramas is to expose them to ridicule, he always represents them as employing the Lowland dialect. Why not assert they spoke French or Hebrew?

North. His attempts against wit are most atrocious. Heaven protect us! do you suppose he talks so in company?

Tickler. Anybody that did not know the worthy Doctor so well as I do, would, I think, guess him to be a monstrous miser. Everybody, according to his account, is in league to cheat him—and one cannot read twenty pages of his work without figuring to oneself the Doctor plodding along warily, with his hand in his breeches' pocket, securing his silk purse, made out of a sow's-ear, from violation. Did he never reflect on the extreme poverty of the Highlanders in many remote moors and mountains, and understand the cause and character of their love of money? Is it less excusable in them than in himself?

North. If idle folks will wander over the Highlands, and get the natives to show them how to follow their noses through the wildernesses, ought they not to pay handsomely for being saved from perdition, in bogs, quagmires, mosses, shelving lake-shores, fords, and chasms?

Tickler. Undoubtedly; and if the orphan son of some old Celt, who perhaps fought under Abercromby, and lost his eyes in ophthalmia, leave his ordinary work beside his shieling, be it what it may, or give up a day's sport on the hill or river to accompany a Sassenach[1] some thirty miles over the moors, with his bit nag too loaded with mineralogy and botany, and all other matter of trash, are five shillings, or twice five, a sufficient remuneration? Not they indeed. Pay him like a post-chaise, fifteenpence a-mile, and send him to his hut rejoicing through a whole winter.

North. Spoken like a gentleman. So, with boats, a couple

[1] *Sassenach*—a Lowlander or Englishman.

of poor fellows live, and that is all, by rowing waif and stray Sassenachs over lochs, or arms of the sea. No regular ferry, mind you. Perhaps days and weeks pass by without their boat being called for—and yet grumble and growl is the go as soon as they hold out a hand for silver or gold. Recollect, old or young hunks, that you are on a tour of pleasure—that you are as fat as a barn-door fowl; and these two boatmen—there they are grinding Gaelic—as lean as laths;—what the worse will you be of being cheated a little? But if you grudge a guinea, why, go round by the head of the loch, and twenty to one you are never seen again in this world.

Tickler. The Highlanders are far from being extortioners. An extraordinary price must be paid for an extraordinary service. But, oh! my dear North, what grouse-soup at Dalnacardoch! You smell it on the homeward hill, as if it were exhaling from the heather;—deeper and deeper still, as you approach the beautiful chimney vomiting forth its intermitting columns of cloud-like peat-smoke, that melts afar over the wilderness!

North. Yes, Tickler—it was Burke that vindicated the claims of smells to the character of the sublime and beautiful.

Tickler. Yes, yes! Burke it was. As you enter the inn, the divine afflatus penetrates your soul. When up-stairs, perhaps in the garret, adorning for dinner, it rises like a cloud of rich distilled perfumes through every chink on the floor, every cranny of the wall. The little mouse issues from his hole, close to the foot of the bed-post, and raising himself, squirrel-like, on his hinder-legs, whets his tusks with his merry paws, and smooths his whiskers.

North. Shakespearean!

Tickler. There we are, a band of brothers round the glorious tureen! Down goes the ladle into "*a profundis clamavi*," and up floats from that blessed Erebus a dozen cunningly resuscitated spirits. Old cocks, bitter to the back-bone, lovingly alternating with young pouts, whose swelling bosoms might seduce an anchorite!

North (*rising*). I must ring for supper. Ambrose—Ambrose—Ambrose!

Tickler. No respect of persons at Dalnacardoch! I plump them into the plates around *sans* selection. No matter al-

though the soup play JAWP[1] from preses to croupier. There, too, sit a few choice spirits of pointers round the board—Don —Jupiter—Sancho—"and the rest"—with steadfast eyes and dewy chops, patient alike of heat, cold, thirst, and hunger—dogs of the desert indeed, and nose-led by unerring instinct right up to the cowering covey in the heather groves on the mountain-side.

North. Is eagle good eating, Timothy? Pococke the traveller used to eat lion: lion pasty is excellent, it is said—but is not eagle tough?

Tickler. Thigh good, devilled. The delight of the Highlands is in the Highland feeling. That feeling is entirely destroyed by stages and regular progression. The waterfalls do not tell upon sober parties—it is tedious in the extreme to be drenched to the skin along high-roads—the rattle of wheels blends meanly with thunder—and lightning is contemptible, seen from the window of a glass coach. To enjoy mist, you must be in the heart of it as a solitary hunter, shooter, or angler. Lightning is nothing unless a thousand feet below you,[2] and the live thunder must be heard leaping, as Byron says, from mountain to mountain, otherwise you might as well listen to a mock peal from the pit of a theatre.

North. The Fall of Foyers is terrible—a deep abyss, savage rock-works, hideous groans, ghost-like vapours, and a rumble as if from eternity.

Tickler. The Falls of the Clyde are majestic. Over Corra Linn the river rolls exultingly; and, recovering itself from that headlong plunge, after some troubled struggles among the shattered cliffs, away it floats in stately pomp, dallying with the noble banks, and subsiding into a deep bright foaming current. Then what woods and groves crowning the noble rocks! How cheerful laughs the cottage pestered by the spray! and how vivid the verdure on each ivied ruin! The cooing of the cushats is a solemn accompaniment to the cataract, and aloft in heaven the choughs reply to that voice of the Forest.

[1] *Jawp*—splash.

[2] In his "Address to a Wild Deer," Professor Wilson says of the hunter:

> "'Tis his, by the mouth of some cavern his seat,
> The lightning of heaven to hold at his feet,
> While the thunder below him that growls from the cloud,
> To him comes on echo more awfully loud."

North. Yes, Tickler—what, after all, equals nature! Here in Ambrose's—waiting for a board of oysters—the season has recommenced—I can sit with my cigar in my mouth, and as the whiff ascends, fancy sees the spray of Stonebyres, or of the Falls of the Beauly, the radiant mists of the Dresne! I agree with Bowles, that nature is all in all for the purpose of poetry—Art stark naught.[1]

Tickler. Yet softly. Who planted those trees by that river side?—Art. Who pruned them?—Art. Who gave room to their giant arms to span that roaring chasm?—Art. Who reared yon edifice on the cliff?—Art. Who flung that stately arch from rock to rock, under which the martins twitter over the unfeared cataract?—Art. Who darkened that long line of precipice with dreadful or glorious associations?—Art, polity, law, war, outrage, and history, writing her hieroglyphics with fire on the scarred visage of those natural battlements. Is that a hermit's cell? Art scooped it out of the living stone. Is that an oratory? Art smoothed the floor for the knee of the penitent. Are the bones of the holy slumbering in that cemetery? Art changed the hollow rock into a tomb, and when the dead saint was laid into the sepulchre, Art joined its music with the torrent's roar, and the mingled anthem rose to the stars which Art had numbered and sprinkled into stations over the firmament of Heaven. What then would Bowles be at, and why more last words to Roscoe? Who made his ink, his pens, and his paper?—Art. Who published his books?—Art. Who criticised them?—Art. Who would fain have damned them?—The Art of the *Edinburgh Review.* And who has been their salvation?—The Art of *Blackwood's Magazine.*

North. Go on, I'll follow thee. Is a great military road over a mountain, groaning with artillery, bristling with bayonets, sounding with bands of music, trampling with cavalry, red, blue, and yellow, with war-dresses, streaming it may be with blood, and overburdened with the standards of mighty nations, less poetical than a vast untrodden Andes, magnificent as may be its solitudes beneath the moon or stars? Is a naked savage more poetical than with his plume, club, war-mat, and tomahawk? Is a log of wood, be it a whole uprooted pine, drifting on the ocean, as poetical as a

[1] See *ante,* p. 12, note 2.

hundred-oared canoe? What more sublime than the anchor by which a great ship hangs in safety within roar of the whirlpool? Than the plummet that speaks of the rock foundations of the eternal sea?

Tickler. What is the chief end of man?—Art. That is a clencher.

North. I cannot imagine, for the life of me, what Ambrose is about. Hush! there he comes. (*Enter Ambrose.*) What is the meaning of this, sir?

Ambrose. Unfold.

(*Folding-doors thrown open, and supper-table is shown.*)

Tickler. What an epergne! Art—art. What would our friend Bowles say to that, North? "Tadmore thus, and Syrian Balbec rose."—(*Transeunt omnes.*)

SCENE II.—*The Pitt Saloon.*

North. Hogg, with his hair powdered, as I endure!—God bless you, James—how are you all at Altrive?

Shepherd. All's well—wool up—nowte[1] on the rise—harvest stacked without a shower—potatoes like stones in the Meggat[2]—turnips like cabbages, and cabbages like baloons—bairns brawly, and Mistress bonnier than ever.—It is quite an *annus mirabilis.*

Tickler. James, my heart warms to hear your voice. That suit of black becomes you extremely—you would make an excellent Moderator of the General Assembly.[3]

Shepherd. You mistake the matter entirely, Tickler; your eyesight fails you;—my coat is a dark blue—waistcoat and breeches the same—but old people discern objects indistinctly by candle-light,—or I shall rather say, by gas-light. The radiance is beautiful.

Tickler. The radiance is beautiful!

Shepherd. Why, you are like old Polonius in the play! I hate an echo—be original or silent.

Tickler. James!

Shepherd. Mr Hogg, if you pleese, sir. Why, you think because I am good-natured, that you and North, and "the rest," are to quizz the Shepherd? Be it so—no objections—But hearken to me, Mr Tickler, my name will be remembered

[1] *Nowte*—cattle. [2] A stream near Hogg's farm.
[3] Of the Church of Scotland.

when the dust of oblivion is yard-deep on the gravestone of the whole generation of Ticklers.—Who are you—what are you—whence are you—whither are you going, and what have you got to say for yourself? A tall fellow, undoubtedly—but Measure for Measure is the comedy in which I choose to act to-night—so, gentlemen, be civil—or I will join the party at Spinks'[1]—and set up an opposition Magazine, that . . . .

North. This is most extraordinary behaviour, Mr Hogg, and any apology . . . . . .

Shepherd. I forgive you, Mr North—but . . . . . .

North. Come—come, you see Tickler is much affected.

Shepherd. So am I, sir,—but is it to be endured . . . . .

Tickler. Pardon me, James; say that you pardon me—at my time of life a man cannot afford to lose a friend. No, he cannot indeed.

Shepherd. Your hand, Mr Tickler. But I will not be the butt of any company.

North. I fear some insidious enemy has been poisoning your ear, James. Never has any one of us ceased, for a moment, to respect you, or to hear you with respect, from the time that you wrote the Chaldee Manuscript . . . . . .

Shepherd. Not another word—not another word—if you love me.

North. Have the Cockneys been bribing you to desert us, James?

Shepherd. The Cockneys! Puir misbegotten deevils! (I maun speak Scotch again now that I'm in good humour). I would rather crack nuts for a haill winter's nicht wi' a monkey, than drink the best peck o' mawt that ever was brewed wi' the King himsel o' that kintra.

North. I understood you were going to visit London this winter.

Shepherd. I am. But I shall choose my ain society there, as I do in Embro' and Yarrow. Oh! Mr North, but the Cockneys are vicious upon Scotland the noo—and mair especially upon your Magazine. You may hae seen a noble, gran', majestic cotch wi' four, or aiblins sax bluid-horses, wheeling awa so smoothly, and wi' sae little splutter, that it seemed to be rinnin only at about seven miles an hour, when a' the

[1] Spinks' Hotel,—the resort (real or supposed) of opposition literary convivialists.

while it was snoovin[1] at thirteen,—and a' at ance some half-a-score o' mangy mongrels come yelping frae a close, or court, whare they had been howkin out food from the fulzie, and trying to bite the verra rims, and spokes, and axle-tree, and hoofs, half-hungry and half-angry, half-fearfu' and half-spitefu', some wi' cocket tails, but maist o' them wi' tails atween their legs, and wi' bleared e'en watching the whip at every flourish o' the gawcy[2] driver, sittin on his box like a throne o' state, —ane gets a clour on the head o' him frae a stane that gangs spinnin aff the wheel—anither gets a stamp frae the hind-hoof o' Bucephalus—a third sprawls into the kennel, pursy and short-winded on garbage—a fourth staggering in his fright between twa passers-by, after a caning from the one, is kicked by the other underneath a cobbler's stall—a fifth lies down, panting as if his heart would break in the Macadamised mire of the approach to a great city, and pretends to be chawing a bone, whereas he is in truth licking his mangled paws —a sixth splutters off in quite an opposite direction, wi' a yell that rues the day in which he and eleven other cynics were born—while a seventh (stranger to the rest of the pack) comes jingling by with a kettle at his tail, and throws quite a martial air over the meeting from his instrumental music— an eighth . . . . .

North. Stop, James—stop—You have given me a pain in my side.

Shepherd. Will you pree[3] this blumanch, Mr North— it gangs slipping awa down the hawse[4] without let or impediment, and lies on the stomach as snaw on snaw, Mr Tickler.

Tickler. God bless you, James—another lobster—scarcely killed yet—but sweet as kisses . . . .

Shepherd. Kisses! Think shame o' yoursel. You that micht be, and perhaps are, a great-great-great-grandfather, speaking o' kisses afore twa callants[5] like me and Mr North!

North. By the by, Shepherd, have you ever observed that ladies—married ladies chiefly—who are more than ordinarily religious, are very fond of good eating?

Shepherd. Without religion a woman's just an even-doun deevil—wi' religion she canna, in spite o' her teeth, be ony-

[1] *Snoovin*—making way quietly but rapidly. [2] *Gawcy*—portly.
[3] *Pree*—try. [4] *Hawse*—throat. [5] *Callant*—young lad.

thing else than an angel. But oh, sirs! Gluttony and greed in God's maist glorious earthly creatures is fearsome!

North. I agree with Byron in thinking that a lady should be cautious what and how she eats—in presence of her lover or husband. Tripe, oysters, pork chops, pease soup, a lady should be shy of.

Shepherd. And rumbledethumps.

North. May I ask, with all due solemnity, what are they?

Shepherd. Something like Mr Hazlitt's character of Shakespeare. Take a peck of purtatoes, and put them into a boyne[1] —at them with a beetle—a dab of butter—the beetle again—anither dab—then cabbage—purtato—beetle and dab—saut meanwhile—and a shake o' common black pepper—feenally, cabbage and purtato throughither—pree, and you'll fin' them decent rumbledethumps.

North. Speaking of Mr Hazlitt—what think you of this charade?

Pygmalion is proud o'er his cups to disclose
Like a gem from Golconda my Twit[2] at his nose;
Bacchus Hunt through the kingdom of Cockaigne is reckon'd,
In his bright yellow breeches, the Flower of my Second;
"Be my Whole," cries Kit North, "to the winds flung away,
When my clans of Contributors rush to the fray."

Shepherd. I have it—I have it. It's a gude sharradd—but rather ower easy. Scabbards!—Scab, ye ken, and bards.

Tickler. I hate personalities. Besides, why call that a scab which is only a pimple?

[1] *Boyne*—a large pot.

[2] For "twit" we should read "first;" and so it was originally written. *Twit* was perhaps an accident of the press; perhaps a substitution by some pungent ally of Wilson's, who, having seen the proof, inserted the more pointed word. "Pygmalion" was Hazlitt, who had published a book entitled "*Liber amoris, or the New Pygmalion*," for the character of which the reader is referred to *Blackwood's Magazine*, vol. xiii. p. 640. Leigh Hunt "in his bright yellow breeches" (a facetious allusion to his nether attire, when a pupil of Christ's Hospital, London, where so many eminent men have been educated), was the translator of Redi's *Bacchus in Tuscany*. These personalities (biting enough, perhaps, at the time) were compensated at a later period by Christopher North, when, indignantly repudiating an offer made by some low hireling to run down Leigh Hunt and his *London Journal*, he exclaims, in words worthy of being written in letters of gold, "THE ANIMOSITIES ARE MORTAL; BUT THE HUMANITIES LIVE FOR EVER."—See *Noctes Ambrosianæ* for August 1834. Leigh Hunt's *Legend of Florence* was reviewed by Professor Wilson in *Blackwood* (March 1840) in terms of high commendation.

Shepherd. I wuss the conversation would tak something mair o' a leeterary turn—or wax philosophical, or theological, or even political. Has ony gude body o' Divinity been published since I was last at Ambrose's, Mr Tickler?

Tickler. No. A few volumes of Discourses, Sermons, Lectures, Charges, and so forth, but nothing worth taking with you to Yarrow, James. They want unction sadly.

North. In every sermon I have written—and the number is not few—I have carefully avoided subdivisions and practical conclusions. I have inspired a vital spirit through the whole composition. My sermons have always been exhortations—extreme length thirty minutes. They have in general been successfully preached to crowded congregations—little sleep, and no snoring—and have pleased both town and country.

Shepherd. Havers. Either you or Mr Tickler would be an awfu' sight in a poupit—though I have seen some grim carls there, it maun be confessed, dreigh[1] at the thocht, and dour[2] at the delivery. But let me see, is there onything stirring in the poetical way? Alas! poor Byron.

North. People say, James, that Byron's tragedies are failures. Fools! Is Cain, the dark, dim, disturbed, insane, hell-haunted Cain, a failure? Is Sardanapalus, the passionate, princely, philosophical, joy-cheated, throne-wearied voluptuary, a failure? Is Heaven and Earth, that magnificent confusion of two worlds, in which mortal beings mingle in love and hate, joy and despair, with immortal—the children of dust claiming alliance with the radiant progeny of the skies, till man and angel seem to partake of one divine being, and to be essences eternal in bliss or bale,—is Heaven and Earth, I ask you, James, a failure? If so, then Apollo has stopt payment—promising a dividend of one shilling in the pound—and all concerned in that house are bankrupts.

Tickler. You have nobly—gloriously vindicated Byron,[3] North, and in doing so, have vindicated the moral and intellectual character of our country. Miserable and pernicious creed, that holds possible the lasting and intimate union of the first, purest, highest, noblest, and most celestial powers of soul and spirit, with confirmed appetencies, foul and degrading lust, cowardice, cruelty, meanness, hypocrisy,

[1] *Dreigh*—tedious. [2] *Dour*—harsh. Lat. *durus.*

[3] In *Blackwood's Magazine* for February 1825.

avarice, and impiety! You,—in a strong attempt made to hold up to execration the nature of Byron as deformed by all those hideous vices,—you, my friend, reverently unveiled the countenance of the mighty dead, and the lineaments struck remorse into the heart of every asperser. You wrote a noble prose commentary on those verses of my friend Charles Grant[1] —although, perhaps, you never saw them—but congenial spirits speak one language on all great themes, in every age and in every country, separated though they may be by lands or seas, or by the darkness of centuries. Beautiful verses they are.

> "Talents, 'tis true, quick, various, bright, hath God
> To Virtue oft denied, on Vice bestow'd;
> Just as fond Nature lovelier colours brings
> To deck the insect's than the eagle's wings.
> But then of Man, the high-born nobler part,
> The ethereal energies that touch the heart,
> Creative Fancy, labouring Thought intense,
> Imagination's wild magnificence,
> And all the dread sublimities of song—
> These, Virtue! these to thee alone belong!"

Shepherd. Gude safe us, man, Mr Tickler, but these be bonny, bonny verses. Wha's the composer?

Tickler. College—University—Cambridge—Prize verses, James.

Shepherd. The deevil they are—that's maist extraordinary.

North. It is the fashion to undervalue Oxford and Cambridge Prize Poems—but it is a stupid fashion. Many of them are most beautiful. Heber's "Palestine!" A flight, as upon angel's wing, over the Holy Land! How fine the opening!

> "Reft of thy sons! amid thy foes forlorn,
> Mourn, widow'd Queen! forgotten Zion, mourn!
> Is this thy place, sad City, this thy throne,
> Where the wild desert rears its craggy stone?
> Where suns unblest their angry lustre fling,
> And way-worn travellers seek the scanty spring?
> Where now the pomp that kings with envy view'd?
> Where now the might that all those kings subdued?
> No martial myriads muster in thy gate,
> No prostrate nations in thy temple wait,

[1] Afterwards Lord Glenelg.

No prophet-lords thy glittering courts among
Wake the full lyre, or sweep the flood of song,
But meagre Want and haggard Hate is there,
And the quick-darting eye of restless Fear;
While cold Oblivion, mid thy ruins laid,
Folds his dark wing beneath the ivied shade."

Tickler. More than one of Wrangham's Prize Poems are excellent—Richard's "Aboriginal Britons" is a powerful and picturesque performance—Chinnery's "Dying Gladiator" magnificent—and Milman's "Apollo Belvidere" splendid, beautiful, and majestic.

North. Macaulay and Praed have written very good Prize Poems. These two young gentlemen ought to make a figure in the world. By the way, you would be glad to see, Tickler, that Knight's *Quarterly Magazine* is *rediviva?*

Tickler. I was so. May it flourish. It is an able and elegant miscellany. Methinks I see the Opium-Eater in last number. Having now connected himself with gentlemen, may his career be bright and prosperous, for he is a man of a million.

North. His original genius and consummate scholarship speedily effected the damnation of Taylor and Hessey's Magazine, according to my prophecy. All the other contributions looked such ninnies beside him, that the public burst out a-laughing in the poor Magazine's face. Then one and all of them began mimicking our friend, and pretended to be Opium-eaters. Now, the effect of the poppy upon the puppy is most offensive to the bystanders, and need not be described. A few grains were administered to the Ass's head in the Lion's skin,[1] who forthwith opined himself to be an editor, and brayed upon the contributors, in the language of Shakespeare,

Friends, countrymen, and Luddites,[2]
LEND ME YOUR EARS.

Taylor and Hessey, hearing "the din of battle bray," fled from the field.

Tickler. I fear the commissariat department is at present badly conducted. The army is in great want of provisions.

Shepherd. Puir fallows! they seem sairly disheartened, and to have lost a' discipline. What's the use o' their aye tantararaing wi' the trumpet, and rat-a-tooing on the drum,

[1] *The Lion's Head* was the title under which Taylor and Hessey's Magazine addressed its "Notices to Correspondents." [2] *Luddites*—rebels.

when the troops are maistly a' without muskets or beggonets,[1] have never got richtly out o' the aukward squad, keep trampin on ane anither's heels, and aye cursin and swearin like so mony limmers[2] lugged alang by the poleish[3] to Bridewell?

Tickler. Political Economy is not a subject for a Magazine. Its principles should be explained at once—brought continuously before the mind. They may be applied to important subjects of trade and polity in a Magazine, as they often have been in yours, North—but the elements of the science must be given in a volume. The Opium-Eater frittered away his philosophy of that science in detached papers that produced no effect on the public mind.[4]

North. I agree with you perfectly. Would that we had his promised "Romance!" For, with all his logic, he is a man of imagination, and, bating a little formal pedantry now and then, a master of the English language, God bless him.

Tickler. James, you are the worst smoker of a cigar in Christendom. No occasion to blow like a hippopotamus. Look at me or North—you would not know we breathed.

Shepherd. It's to keep mysel frae fallin asleep. I never heard you baith muckle mair stupider than you have been a' the nicht. A' my wonder is, how you contrive to keep up that Magazine. It's a waefu' sicht to see a' the other Magas pining awa in a kind o' green sickness, just for want o' contributors, little bigger in bulk than the Living Skeleton now in London. But there gangs our ain Maga, a strapping queau, wi' a satisfied ee, a lilting voice, and a step o' elasticity, and, may I say it without coorseness, she's perpetually in the family-way. But Maga's your honest wedded wife, Mr North—and all her productions are legitimate. Hear till that auld watchman, crawing the hour like a bit bantam. What's the cretur screeching? Twa o'clock!! Mercy me!—we maun be aff. (*Exeunt omnes.*)

[1] *Beggonets*—bayonets.

[2] *Limmers*—worthless characters, usually applied to women.

[3] *Poleish*—police.

[4] Of these "detached papers" which have since been republished in Mr De Quincey's collected works, Mr M'Culloch says (in his *Literature of Political Economy*) that "they are unequalled, perhaps, for brevity, pungency, and force. They not only bring the Ricardian theory of value into strong relief, but triumphantly repel, or rather annihilate, the objections urged against it by Malthus, Say, and others. They may indeed be said to have exhausted the subject."

IV.

(DECEMBER 1825.)

North, Shepherd, Tickler.

North. Thank heaven for winter! Would that it lasted all year long! Spring is pretty well in its way, with budding branches and carolling birds, and wimpling burnies, and fleecy skies, and dew-like showers softening and brightening the bosom of old mother earth. Summer is not much amiss, with umbrageous woods, glittering atmosphere, and awakening thunder-storms. Nor let me libel Autumn in her gorgeous bounty, and her beautiful decays. But Winter, dear cold-handed, warm-hearted Winter, welcome thou to my fur-clad bosom! Thine are the sharp, short, bracing, invigorating days, that screw up muscle, fibre, and nerve, like the strings of an old Cremona discoursing excellent music—thine the long snow-silent or hail-rattling nights, with earthly firesides and heavenly luminaries, for home comforts, or travelling imaginations, for undisturbed imprisonment, or unbounded freedom, for the affections of the heart and the flights of the soul! Thine too——

Shepherd. Thine too, skatin, and curlin, and grewin,[1] and a' sorts o' deevilry amang lads and lasses at rockins and kirns. Beef and greens! Beef and greens! O, Mr North, beef and greens!

North. Yes, James, I sympathise with your enthusiasm. Now, and now only, do carrots and turnips deserve the name. The season this of rumps and rounds. Now the whole nation sets in for serious eating—serious and substantial eating, James, half leisure, half labour—the table loaded with a lease

[1] *Grewin*—coursing.

of life, and each dish a year. In the presence of that Haggis, I feel myself immortal.

Shepherd. Butcher-meat, though, and coals, are likely, let me tell you, to sell at a perfec' ransom frae Martinmas to Michaelmas.

North. Paltry thought. Let beeves and muttons look up, even to the stars, and fuel be precious as at the Pole. Another slice of the stot, James, another slice of the stot—and, Mr Ambrose, smash that half-ton lump of black diamond till the chimney roar and radiate like Mount Vesuvius.—Why so glum, Tickler?—why so glum?

Tickler. This outrageous merriment grates my spirits. I am not in the mood. 'Twill be a severe winter, and I think of the poor.

North. Why the devil think of the poor at this time of day? Are not wages good, and work plenty, and is not charity a British virtue?

Shepherd. I never heard sic even-doun nonsense, Mr Tickler, in a' my born days. I met a puir woman ganging alang the brigg, wi' a deevil's dizzen o' bairns, ilka ane wi' a daud[1] o' breid in the tae haun and a whang[2] o' cheese i' the tither, while their cheeks were a' blawn out like sae mony Boreases, wi' something better than wun'; and the mither hersel, a weel-faur'd hizzie, tearin awa at the fleshy shank o' a marrow-bane, mad wi' hunger, but no wi' starvation, for these are twa different things, Mr Tickler. I can assure you that puir folks, mair especially gin they be beggars, are hungry four or five times a-day; but starvation is seen at night sitting by an empty aumry[3] and a cauld hearthstane. There's little or nae starvation the now, in Scotlan'!

North. The people are, on the whole, well off.—Take some pickles, Timothy, to your steak. Dickson's[4] mustard is superb.

Shepherd. I canna say that I a'thegither just properly understan' the system o' the puir-laws; but I ken this, that puir folks there will be till the end o' *Blackwood's Magazine*, and, that granted, maun there no be some kind o' provision for them, though it may be kittle[5] to calculate the preceese amount?

[1] *Daud*—lump. [2] *Whang*—slice. [3] *Aumry*—cupboard in a corner.
[4] An Edinburgh seedsman. [5] *Kittle*—difficult.

North. Are the English people a dependent, ignorant, grovelling, mean, debased, and brutal people?

Shepherd. Not they, indeed—they're a powerfu' population, second only to the Scotch. The English puir-laws had better be cut down some twa-three millions, but no abolished. Thae Political Economy creatures are a cruel set—greedier theirsels than gaberlunzies[1]—yet grudging a handfu' o' meal to an auld wife's wallet. Charity is in the heart, not in the head, and the open haun should be stretched out o' the sudden, unasked and free, not held back wi' clutched fingers like a meeser, while the Wiseacre shakes his head in cauldrife[2] calculation, and ties a knot on the purse o' him on principle.

North. Well said, James, although perhaps your tenets are scarcely tenable.

Shepherd. Scarcely tenable? Wha'll take them frae me either by force or reason? Oh! we're fa'en into argument, and that's what I canna thole[3] at meals. Mr Tickler, there's nae occasion, man, to look sae down-in-the-mouth—everybody kens ye're a man o' genius, without your pretending to be melancholy.

Tickler. I have no appetite, James.

Shepherd. Nae appeteet! how suld ye hae an appeteet? A bowl o' Mollygo-tawny soup, wi' bread in proportion—twa codlins (wi' maist part o' a labster in that sass), the first gash o' the jiget—stakes—then I'm maist sure, pallets, and finally guse—no to count jeellies and coosturd, and bluemange, and many million mites in that Campsie Stilton—better than ony English—a pot o' Draught—twa lang shankers o' ale—noos and thans a sip o' the auld port, and just afore grace a caulker o' Glenlivet, that made your een glower and water in your head as if you had been lookin at Mrs Siddons in the sleep-walking scene in Shakspeare's tragedy of *Macbeth*—gin ye had an appeteet after a' that destruction o' animal and vegetable matter, your maw would be like that o' Death himsel, and your stamach insatiable as the grave.

Tickler. Mr Ambrose, no laughter, if you please, sir.

North. Come, come, Tickler—had Hogg and Heraclitus been contemporaries, it would have saved the shedding of a world of tears.

Shepherd. Just laugh your fill, Mr Ambrose. A smile is

[1] *Gaberlunzies*—mendicants. [2] *Cauldrife*—chill. [3] *Thole*—endure.

aye becoming that honest face o' yours. But I'll no be sae wutty again, gin I can help it.

(*Exit Mr Ambrose with the epergne.*)

Tickler. Mr Ambrose understands me. It does my heart good to know when his arm is carefully extended over my shoulder, to put down or to remove. None of that hurry-and-no-speed waiter-like hastiness about our Ambrose! With an ever-observant eye he watches the goings-on of the board, like an astronomer watching the planetary system. He knows when a plate is emptied to be filled no more, and lo! it is withdrawn as by an invisible hand. During some "syncope and solemn pause" you may lay down your knife and fork and wipe your brow, nor dread the evanishing of a half-devoured howtowdy; the moment your eye has decided on a dish, there he stands plate in hand in a twinkling beside tongue or turkey! No playing at cross purposes—the sheep's head of Mullion usurping the place of the kidneys of ODoherty. The most perfect confidence reigns round the board. The possibility of mistake is felt to be beyond the fear of the hungriest imagination; and sooner shall one of Jupiter's satellites forsake his orbit, jostling the stars, and wheeling away into some remoter system, than our Ambrose run against any of the subordinates, or leave the room while North is in his chair.

North. Hear the Glenlivet!—hear the Glenlivet!

Shepherd. No, Mr North, nane o' your envious attributions o' ae spirit for anither. It's the sowl within him that breaks out, like lightning in the collied[1] night, or in the dwawm-like[2] silence o' a glen the sudden soun' o' a trumpet.

Tickler. Give me your hand, James.

Shepherd. There noo—there noo. It's aye me that's said to be sae fond o' flattery; and yet only see how by a single word o' my mouth I can add sax inches to your stature, Mr Tickler, and make ye girn like the spirit that saluted De Gama at the Cape o' Storms.

North. Hear the Glenlivet!—hear the Glenlivet!

Shepherd. Hush, ye haveril.[3] Give us a speech yoursel, Mr North, and then see who'll cry, "Hear the Glenlivet!—

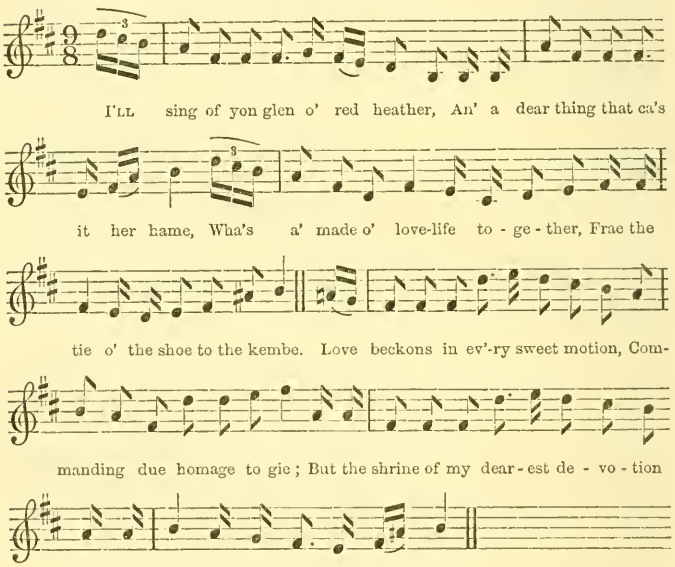
[1] "Like lightning in the *collied* night," *Midsummer Night's Dream.* Collied—blackened as with coal.

[2] *Dwawm-like*—swoon-like. [3] *Haveril*—a chattering half-witted person.

hear the Glenlivet!" then. But haud your tongues, baith o' you—dinna stir a fit. And as for you, Mr Tickler, howk the tow out o' your lug, and hear till a sang.

THE BRAKENS[1] WI' ME.[2]

AIR—"*Driving the Steers.*"



2.

I fleeched and I prayed the dear lassie
To gang to the brakens wi' me,
But though neither lordly nor saucy,
Her answer was, "Laith will I be.
Ah, is it nae cruel to press me
To that which wad breed my heart wae,
An' try to entice a poor lassie
The gate she's o'er ready to gae.

[1] *Brakens*—fern. [2] Written by Hogg.

3.

" I neither hae father nor mither,
Good counsel or caution to gie,
And prudence has whisper'd me never
To gang to the brakens wi' thee.
I neither hae tocher nor mailing,
I hae but ae boast—I am free ;
But a' wad be tint without failing
Amang the green brakens wi' thee."

4.

" Dear lassie, how can ye upbraid me,
And try your ain love to beguile,
For ye are the richest young lady
That ever gaed o'er the kirk-stile.
Your smile that is blither than ony,
The bend o' your sunny ee-bree,
And the love-blinks aneath it sae bonny,
Are five hunder thousand to me."

5.

There's joy in the blithe blooming feature,
When love lurks in every young line ;
There's joy in the beauties of nature,
There's joy in the dance and the wine ;
But there's a delight will ne'er perish
'Mong pleasures so fleeting and vain,
And that is to love and to cherish
The fond little heart that's our ain.

Tickler (*Passing his hand across his eyes*). " I'm never merry when I hear sweet music."

North. Your voice, James, absolutely gets mellower through years. Next York Festival you must sing a solo — " Angels ever bright and fair," or " Farewell, ye limpid streams and floods."

Shepherd. I was at the last York Festival, and one day I was in the chorus, next to Grundy of Kirk-by-Lonsdale. I kent my mouth was wide open, but I never heard my ain voice in the magnificent roar.

North. Describe—James—describe.

Shepherd. As weel describe a glorious dream of the seventh heaven. Thousands upon thousands o' the most beautiful

angels sat mute and still in the Cathedral. Weel may I call them angels, although a' the time I knew them to be frail evanescent creatures o' this ever-changing earth. A sort o' paleness was on their faces, ay, even on the faces where the blush-roses o' innocence were blooming like the flowers o' Paradise—for a shadow came ower them frae the awe o' their religious hearts that beat not, but were chained as in the presence of their Great Maker. All eyne were fixed in a solemn, raised gaze, something mournful-like I thocht, but it was only in a happiness great and deep as the calm sea. I saw—I did not see the old massy pillars—now I seemed to behold the roof o' the Cathedral, and now the sky o' heaven, and a licht —I had maist said a murmuring licht, for there surely was a faint spirit-like soun' in the streams o' splendour that came through the high Gothic window, left shadows here and there throughout the temple, till a' at ance the organ sounded, and I could have fallen down on my knees.

North. Thank you kindly, James.

Shepherd. I understand the hint, sir. Catch me harpin ower lang on ae string. Yet music's a subject I could get geyan[1] tiresome upon.

Tickler. So is painting and poetry.

Shepherd. Paintin! na—that's the warst ava. Gang into an exhibition, and only look at a crowd o' Cockneys, some wi' specs, and some wi' quizzing-glasses, and faces without ae grain o' meaning in them o' ony kind whatsomever, a' glowering perhaps at a picture o' ane o' Nature's maist fearfu' or magnificent warks! Mowdiewarts,[2] they micht as weel look at the new-harled[3] gable-end o' a barn. Is't a picture o' a deep dungeon-den o' ruefu' rocks, and the waterfa' its ragin prisoner, because nae wizard will with his key open but a wicket in the ancient gates of that lonesome penitentiary? Is't a picture o' a lang lang endless glen, wi' miles on miles o' dreary mosses, and hags, and lochs—thae wee black fearsome lochs that afttimes gurgle in their sullen sleep, as if they wanted to grup and drown ye as you gang by them, some lanely hour, takin care to keep at safe distance along the benty[4] knowes—mountain above mountain far and near, some o' them illuminated wi' a' their woods till the verra pine-trees

[1] *Geyan*—rather.
[2] *Mowdiewarts*—moles.
[3] *New-harled*—new-plastered.
[4] *Benty*—covered with bent-grass.

seem made o' heaven's sunshine, and ithers, wi' a weight o' shadows that drown the sight o' a' their precipices, and gar the michty mass o' earth gloom like thunder-clouds, wi' nae leevin thing in the solitude but your plaided self, and the eagle like a mote in the firmament—siccan a scene as Tamson[1] o' Duddingston wad trummel[2] as he daured to paint it,—What, I ask, could a Princes Street maister or missy ken o' sic a wark mair than a red-deer wad ken o' the inside o' George's Street Assembly Rooms, gin he were to be at Gow's ball?

Tickler. Or in the vegetable market. North, have you seen that worthy original Martin,[3] since he came to town?

North. I have—and I have seen his collection too, at No. 44 North Hanover Street; rare, choice, splendid. What a Paul Potter! What a John Both! What a Rembrandt! What a Corregio! It is a proud thing to know that such pictures find purchasers in Scotland; for we are not rich.

Tickler. Neither are we poor. We say that Edinburgh is a city of palaces. This is a somewhat exaggerated spirit of vain talk; but certainly it contains no small number of large commodious houses, in which five, ten, twenty thousand a-year may be spent with consistency and decorum; and of the furniture of each shall no part be pictures? Bare walls in the houses of wealthy men betray a poorness of spirit. Let them go to my friend Martin.

Tickler. "The Burgo-Master"—Rembrandt's of course—I remember to have seen years ago. It is from the collection of Vandergucht. What a solemn and stern expression over forehead and eyes! You do not say the picture speaks; for the old Burgo-Master is plainly a man of few words—but it thinks, and you see embodied there a world of intellect. What did these fellows do with all that powerful mind? One and all of them ought to have left behind them—systems.

North. They were better employed — fathers, heads of houses, civic rulers. But I see yet before me that "Virgin and Child"—a study, I believe, for Corregio's famous picture in the Louvre, "The Marriage of St Catharine." What meek maternal love mingled with a reverential awe of her own divine Babe!

[1] The Rev. John Thomson, minister of Duddingston, near Edinburgh, was the first Scottish landscape-painter of his day. He died in 1840, aged 62.

[2] *Trummel*—tremble.

[3] *Not* John Martin, the painter of "Belshazzar's Feast" and the "Deluge."

How beautifully has Mary braided, scarcely braided, folded up as with a single touch, ere yet her child had awoke, that soft silken shining hair—tresses rich in youthful luxuriance, yet tamed down to a matron simplicity, in sweet accordance with that devout forehead and bliss-breathing eyes!

Tickler. Such pictures scarcely bear to be spoken of at all. Let them hang in their silent holiness upon the wall of our most secret room, to be gazed on at times when we feel the emptiness and vanity of all things in this life, and when our imagination, coming to the relief of our hearts, willingly wafts us to the heaven which inspired such creations of genius. Those great painters, North, were great divines.

North. A mere landscape of this earth is better fitted for ordinary hours. In that Paul Potter, did you ever breathe anything like the transparency of the atmosphere—ever feel such warmth of meridian sunshine! Two quiet human figures, I think, and a couple of cows, that's all; and yet that little bit of canvass is a picture—a poem of the pastoral life.

Tickler. Here's Martin's health—a bumper.

Shepherd. Pray, what is this New Military Academy?[1] Is it a gude institution, Mr North?

North. I think it is. It will not only give young soldiers some useful knowledge, but put spirit and spunk into them before they enter upon service.

Tickler. Most happy was I to see Signor Francalanza appointed fencing-master to the Institution. He is a perfect teacher.

North. And a man of probity.

Tickler. And of accomplishments.[2] Could I touch the guitar like the Signor, I would set out for Venice to-morrow, and serenade myself into the love of the fairest dames in Italy.

Shepherd. Fie shame, Mr Tickler! fie shame, and you a married man!

Tickler. I had forgot it, James.

Shepherd. That's no true. Nae man ever forgot he was married. As for the gittarre, I wadna niffer[3] the fiddle for that triflin bit chirpin tam-thoom o' an instrument. Yet I allow

[1] An admirable institution, which still flourishes under the energetic superintendence of Captain Orr.

[2] This excellent man was a general favourite in Edinburgh society, and worthy of the commendations here bestowed upon him. He returned to Italy, his native country, and died there some years ago.

[3] *Niffer*—exchange.

that Mr Frank Alonzo fingers 't wi' mickle taste and spirit; and his singing o' outlandish airs makes ane maist think that he understands French and Italian himsel.

North. What think you, James, of the projected Fish Company?

Shepherd. Just everything that's gude. I never look at the sea without lamenting the backward state of its agriculture. Were every eatable land animal extinc', the human race could dine and soup out o' the ocean till a' eternity.

Tickler. No fish-sauce equal to the following: Ketchup—mustard—cayenne pepper—butter amalgamated on your plate *proprio manu*, each man according to his own proportions. Yetholm ketchup made by the gipsies. Mushrooms for ever—damn walnuts.

North. I care little about what I eat or drink.

Shepherd. Lord have mercy on us—what a lee! There does not, at this blessed moment, breathe on the earth's surface ae human being that doesna prefer eating and drinking to all ither pleasures o' body or sowl.[1] This is the rule: Never think about either the ane or the ither but when you are at the board. Then, eat and drink wi' a' your powers—moral, intellectual, and physical. Say little, but look freendly—tak care chiefly o' yoursel, but no, if you can help it, to the utter oblivion o' a' ithers. This may soun' queer, but it's gude manners, and worth a' Chesterfield. Them at the twa ends o' the table maun just reverse that rule—till ilka body has been twice served—and then aff at a haun-gallop.

North. What think ye of luncheons?

Shepherd. That they are the disturbers o' a' earthly happiness. I daurna trust mysel wi' a luncheon. In my haun's it becomes an untimeous denner—for after a hantle o' cauld meat, muirfowl pies, or even butter and bread, what reasonable cretur can be ready afore gloamin for a het denner? So, whene'er I'm betrayed into a luncheon, I mak it a luncheon wi' a vengeance; and then order in the kettle, and finish aff wi' a jug or twa, just the same as gin it had been a regular denner wi' a table-cloth. Bewaur the tray.

[1] "Some people," says Dr Samuel Johnson, "have a foolish way of not minding, or pretending not to mind, what they eat. For my part, I mind my belly very studiously, and very carefully; for I look upon it, that he who does not mind his belly, will hardly mind anything else."—BOSWELL'S *Life*, chap. xvii.

North. A few anchovies, such as I used to enjoy with my dear Davy[1] at the corner, act as a whet, I confess, and nothing more.

Shepherd. I never can eat a few o' onything, even ingans. Ance I begin, I maun proceed; and I devoor them—ilka ane being the last—till my een are sae watery that I think it is raining. Break not in upon the integrity o' time atween breakfast and the blessed hour o' denner.

North. The mid-day hour is always, to my imagination, the most delightful hour of the whole Alphabet.

Shepherd. I understaun. During that hour—and there is nae occasion to allow difference for clocks, for in nature every object is a dial—how many thousand groups are collected a' ower Scotland, and a' ower the face o' the earth—for in every clime wondrously the same are the great leading laws o' man's necessities—under bits o' bonny buddin or leaf-fu' hedgeraws, some bit fragrant and flutterin birk-tree, aneath some ower-hangin rock in the desert, or by some diamond well in its mossy cave—breakin their bread wi' thanksgiving, and eatin't with the clear blood o' health meandering in the heaven-blue veins o' the sweet lasses, while the cool airs are playing amang their haflins-covered[2] bosoms—wi' many a jeist and sang atween, and aiblins kisses too, at ance dew and sunshine to the peasant's or shepherd's soul—then up again wi' lauchter to their wark amang the tedded grass, or the corn-rigs sae bonny, scenes that Robbie Burns lo'ed sae weel and sang sae gloriously—and the whilk, need I fear to say't, your ain Ettrick Shepherd, my dear fellows, has sung on his auld Border harp, a sang or twa that may be remembered when the bard that wauk'd them is i' the mools, and "at his feet the green-grass turf, and at his head a stane."

Tickler. Come, come, James, none of your pathos—none of your pathos, my dear James. (*Looking red about the eyes.*)

North. We were talking of codlins.[3]

Shepherd. True, Mr North, but folk canna be aye talkin o' codlins, ony mair than aye eatin them; and the great charm o' conversation is being aff on ony wind that blaws. Pleasant conversation between friends is just like walking through a mountainous kintra—at every glen-mouth the wun' blaws frae

[1] David Bridges. See *ante*, p. 28, note 1. [2] *Haflins-covered*—half-covered.
[3] *Codlins*—small cod; not *apples*, as the American editor supposes.

a different airt[1]—the bit bairnies come tripping alang in opposite directions—noo a harebell scents the air—noo sweet-briar —noo heather bank—here is a gruesome quagmire, there a plat o' sheep-nibbled grass smooth as silk, and green as emeralds—here a stony region of cinders and lava—there groves o' the lady-fern embowering the sleeping roe—here the hillside in its own various dyes resplendent as the rainbow, and there woods that the Druids would have worshipped—hark, sound sounding in the awfu' sweetness o' evening wi' the cushat's sang, and the deadened roar o' some great waterfa' far aff in the very centre o' the untrodden forest. A' the warks o' ootward natur are symbolical o' our ain immortal souls. Mr Tickler, is't not just even sae?

Tickler. Sheridan—Sheridan—what was Sheridan's talk to our own Shepherd's, North?

North. A few quirks and cranks studied at a looking-glass[2] —puns painfully elaborated with pen and ink for extemporaneous reply—bon-mots generated in *malise prepense*—witticisms jotted down in short-hand to be extended when he had put on the spur of the occasion—the drudgeries of memory to be palmed off for the ebullitions of imagination—the coinage of the counter passed for currency hot from the mint of fancy —squibs and crackers ignited and exploded by a Merry-Andrew, instead of the lightnings of the soul darting out forked or sheeted from the electrical atmosphere of an inspired genius.

Shepherd. I wish that you but saw my monkey, Mr North. He would make you hop the twig in a guffaw. I hae got a pole erected for him, o' about some 150 feet high, on a knowe ahint Mount Benger; and the way the cretur rins up to the knob, lookin ower the shouther o' him, and twisting his tail roun' the pole for fear o' playin thud on the grun', is comical past a' endurance.

North. Think you, James, that he is a link?

Shepherd. A link in creation? Not he, indeed. He is merely a monkey. Only to see him on his observatory, beholding the sunrise! or weeping, like a Laker, at the beauty o' the moon and stars!

[1] *Airt*—point of the compass.

[2] How carefully Sheridan's impromptus were prepared beforehand, may be learned from Moore's Life of that celebrated wit, just published at the date of this number of the *Noctes*.

North. Is he a bit of a poet?

Shepherd. Gin he could but speak and write, there can be nae manner o' doubt that he would be a gran' poet. Safe us! what een in the head o' him! Wee, clear, red, fiery, watery, malignant-lookin een, fu' o' inspiration.

Tickler. You should have him stuffed.

Shepherd. Stuffed, man! say, rather, embalmed. But he's no likely to dee for years to come—indeed, the cretur's engaged to be married; although he's no in the secret himsel yet. The bawns[1] are published.

Tickler. Why, really, James, marriage, I think, ought to be simply a civil contract.

Shepherd. A civil contract! I wuss it was. But oh! Mr Tickler, to see the cretur sittin wi' a pen in's hand, and pipe in's mouth, jotting down a sonnet, or odd, or lyrical ballad! Sometimes I put that black velvet cap ye gied me on his head, and ane o' the bairns's auld big-coats on his back; and then, sure aneugh, when he takes his stroll in the avenue, he is a heathenish christian.

North. Why, James, by this time, he must be quite like one of the family?

Shepherd. He's a capital flee-fisher. I never saw a monkey throw a lighter line in my life. But he's greedy o' the gude linns, and canna thole to see onybody else gruppin great anes but himsel. He accompanied me for twa-three days in the season to the Trows, up aboon Kelso yonner; and Kersse[2] allowed that he worked a salmon to a miracle. Then, for rowing a boat!

Tickler. Why don't you bring him to Ambrose's?

Shepherd. He's sae bashfu'. He never shines in company; and the least thing in the world will mak him blush.

Tickler. Have you seen the *Sheffield Iris*, containing an account of the feast given to Montgomery[3] the poet, his long-winded speech, and his valedictory address to the world as abdicating editor of a provincial newspaper?

Shepherd. I have the *Iris*—that means Rainbow—in my pocket, and it made me proud to see sic honours conferred on

[1] *Bawns*—banns. [2] Kersse, a celebrated Kelso salmon-fisher.

[3] James Montgomery, author of *The World before the Flood*, and other esteemed poems, was born in 1771, and died in 1854.

genius. Lang-wunded speech, Mr Tickler! What, would you have had Montgomery mumble twa-three sentences, and sit down again, before an assemblage o' a hundred o' the most respectable o' his fellow-townsmen, with Lord Milton at their head, a' gathered thegither to honour with heart and hand One of the Sons of Song?

North. Right, James, right. I love to hear one poet praise another. There is too little of that nowadays. *Tantæne animis celestibus iræ?*

Shepherd. His speech is full of heart and soul—amang the best I hae read; and to them that heard and saw it, it must have been just perfectly delightful.

Tickler. Perhaps he spoiled it in the delivery; probably he is no orator.

Shepherd. Gude faith, Mr Tickler, I suspec you're really no very weel the nicht, for you're desperate stupid. Nae orator, aiblins! But think you it was naething to see the man in his glory, and to hear him in his happiness? Yes, glory, sir, for what do poets live for but the sympathy of God's rational creatures? Too often we know not that that sympathy is ours —nor in what degree, nor how widely we have awakened it. But here Montgomery had it flashed back upon his heart by old familiar faces, and a hundred firesides sent their representatives to bless the man whose genius had cheered their light for thirty winters.

Tickler. Hear, hear! Forgive me, my dear Shepherd; I merely wished to bring you out, to strike a chord, to kindle a spark, to spring a mine . . . . .

Shepherd. Hooly and fairly. There's no need o' exaggeration. But my opinion—my feeling o' Montgomery is just that which he himself, in this speech—there's the paper, but dinna tear't—has boldly and modestly expressed. "Success upon success in a few years crowned my labours—not, indeed, with fame and fortune, as these were lavished on my greater contemporaries, in comparison of whose magnificent possessions on the British Parnassus my little plot of ground is as Naboth's vineyard to Ahab's kingdom; but it is my own: it is no copyhold; I borrowed it, I leased it from none. Every foot of it I enclosed from the common myself; and I can say, that not an inch which I had once gained here have I ever lost."

North. On such an occasion, Montgomery was not only entitled, but bound to speak of himself—and by so doing he "has graced his cause." His poetry will live, for he has *heart and imagination.* The religious spirit of his poetry is affecting and profound. But you know who has promised to give me an "Article on Montgomery;" so meanwhile let us drink his health in a bumper.

Shepherd. Stop, stop, my jug's done. But never mind, I'll drink't in pure speerit. (*Bibunt omnes.*)

Tickler. Did we include his politics?

Shepherd. Faith, I believe no. Let's tak anither bumper to his politics.

North. James, do you know what you're saying?—the man is a Whig. If we do drink his politics, let it be in empty glasses.

Shepherd. Na, na. I'll drink no man's health, nor yet ony ither thing, out o' an empty glass. My political principles are so well known, that my consistency would not suffer were I to drink the health o' the great Whig leader, Satan himsel; besides, James Montgomery is, I verily believe, a true patriot. Gin he thinks himself a Whig, he has nae understanding whatever o' his ain character. I'll undertak to bring out the Toryism that's in him in the course o' a single Noctes. Toryism is an innate principle o' human nature—Whiggism but an evil habit. O, sirs, this is a gran' jug!

Tickler. I am beginning to feel rather hungry.

Shepherd. I hae been rather sharp-set ever sin' Mr Ambrose took awa the cheese.

North. 'Tis the night of the 21st of October—The battle of Trafalgar—Nelson's death—the greatest of all England's heroes—

> "His march was o'er the mountain-wave,
> His home was on the deep."

Nelson not only destroyed the naval power of all the enemies of England, but he made our naval power immortal. Thank God, he died at sea.

Tickler. A noble creature; his very failings were ocean-born.

Shepherd. Yes—a cairn to his memory would not be out of place even at the head of the most inland glen. Not a sea-

mew floats up into our green solitudes that tells not of Nelson.

North. His name makes me proud that I am an islander. No continent has such a glory.

Shepherd. Look out o' the window—What a fleet o' stars in Heaven! Yon is the Victory—a hundred gun-ship—I see the standard of England flying at the main. The brichtest luminary o' nicht says in that halo, "England expects every man to do his duty."

North. Why might not the battle of Trafalgar be the subject of a great poem? It was a consummation of national prowess. Such a poem need not be a narrative one, for that at once becomes a Gazette, yet still it might be graphic. The purport of it would be, England on the Ocean; and it would be a Song of Glory. In such a poem the character and feelings of British seamen would have agency; and very minute expression of the passions with which they fight, would be in place. Indeed, the life of such a poem would be wanting, if it did not contain a record of the nature of the Children of the Ocean—the strugglers in war and storm. The character of sailors, severed from all other life, is poetical.

Tickler. Yes—it would be more difficult to ground a poem under the auspices of the Duke of York.

North. The fleet, too, borne on the ocean, human existence resting immediately on great Elementary Nature; and connected immediately with her great powers; and ever to the eye single in the ocean-solitudes.

Tickler. True. But military war is much harder to conceive in poetry. Our army is not an independent existence, having for ages a peculiar life of its own. It is merely an arm of the nation, which it stretches forth when need requires. Thus though there are the highest qualities in our soldiery, there is scarcely the individual life which fits a body of men to belong to poetry.

North. In Schiller's *Camp of Wallenstein* there is individual life given to soldiers, and with fine effect. But I do not see that the army of Lord Wellington, all through the war of the Peninsula, though the most like a continued separate life of anything we have had in the military way, comes up to poetry.

Tickler. Scarcely, North. I think that if an army can be

viewed poetically, it must be merely considering it as the courage of the nation, clothed in shape, and acting in visible energy; and to that tune there might be warlike strains for the late war. But then it could have nothing of peculiar military life, but would merge in the general life of the nation. There could be no camp life.

Shepherd. I don't know, gentlemen, that I follow you, for I am no great scholar. But allow me to say, in better English than I generally speak, for that beautiful star—Venus, I suspec, or perhaps Mars—in ancient times they shone together—that if any poet, breathing the spirit of battle, knew intimately the Peninsular War, it would rest entirely with himself to derive poetry from it or not. Every passion that is intense may be made the groundwork of poetry; and the passion with which the British charge the French is sufficiently intense, I suspec, to ground poetry upon. Not a critic of the French School would deny it.

North. Nothing can be better, or better expressed, my dear James. That war would furnish some battle-chants—but the introduction of our land-fighting into any great poetry would, I conjecture, require the intermingling of interests not warlike.

Shepherd. I think so too. What think you of the *Iliad*, Mr North.

North. The great occupation of the power of man, James, in early society, is to make war. Of course, his great poetry will be that which celebrates war. The mighty races of men, and their mightiest deeds, are represented in such poetry. It contains "the glory of the world" in some of its noblest ages. Such is Homer. The whole poem of Homer (the *Iliad*) is war, yet not much of the whole *Iliad* is fighting; and that, with some exceptions, not the most interesting. If we consider warlike poetry purely as breathing the spirit of fighting, the fierce ardour of combat, we fall to a much lower measure of human conception. Homer's poem is intellectual, and full of affections; it would go as near to make a philosopher as a soldier. I should say that war appears as the business of Homer's heroes, not often a matter of pure enjoyment. One would conceive, that if there could be found anywhere, in language, the real breathing spirit of lust for fight, which is in some nations, there would be conceptions, and passion of

blood-thirst, which are not in Homer. There are flashes of it in Æschylus.

Shepherd. I wish to heaven I could read Greek. I'll begin to-morrow.

Tickler. The songs of Tyrtæus goading into battle are of that kind, and their class is evidently not a high one. Far above them must have been those poems of the ancient German nations, which were chaunted in the front of battle, reciting the acts of old heroes to exalt their courage. These being breathed out of the heart of passion of a people, must have been good. The spirit of fighting was there involved with all their most ennobling conceptions, and yet was merely pugnacious.

North. The *Iliad* is remarkable among military poems in this, that, being all about war, it instils no passion for war. None of the high inspiring motives to war are made to kindle the heart. In fact, the cause of war is false on both sides. But there is a glory of war, like the splendour of sunshine, resting upon and enveloping all.

Shepherd. I'm beginning to get a little clearer in the upper storey. That last jug was a poser. How feel you, gentlemen—do you think you're baith quite sober? Our conversation is rather beginning to get a little heavy. Tak a mouthfu'. (NORTH *quaffs.*)

Tickler. North, you look as if you were taking an observation. Have you discovered any new comet?

North. Do you think, Shepherd, as much building has been going on within these dozen years in the moon as in the New Town of Edinburgh?

Shepherd. Nae doubt, in proportion to the size of the moon's metropolis. Surely a' the chimneys devoor their ain smoke yonder, sae pure are a' the purlieus o' the planet. Think you there is ony AMBROSE in the orb? or ony editors?

North. Why, James, speaking of editors, I had a strange dream t'other night. I dreamed I saw the editor of the Imaginary Magazine.

Shepherd. Faith, that was comical. But what was't?

North. The moment I saw him, I knew that he was the editor of the Imaginary Magazine—the non-existing Christopher North of a non-existing Maga; and what amused me

much was, that I saw from the expression of his countenance that he was under prosecution for a libel.

Shepherd. Had he advised any man to commit murder?

North. He entered into a long detail of his Magazine, and all the leading articles were on subjects I had never before heard of; yet I knew the libellous article instinctively. Indeed, he showed me his last Number; and I thought that, after perusing a few pages, I had put it into my pocket. "In an unknown tongue he warbled melody."

Shepherd. The stuff that dreams are made of!—What did he offer you per sheet?

North. Kinga men kulish abatton. These were his very words.

Shepherd. Dang it, you're bamming me.

North. No; he seemed in a great fright about his January Number, and looked up in my face with such an inexplicable face of his own, that I awoke.

Shepherd. I recollec ance dreaming o' an unearthly Hallow-Fair. It was held on a great plain, and it seemed as if a' the sheep in the universe were there in ae flock. Shepherds, too, frae every planet in space. Yet, wherever I walked, each nation kent me; and chiels frae China, apparently, and the lands ayont the Pole, jogged ane anither's shouthers, and said, "That's the Ettrick Shepherd." I gaed into the tent o' a Tartar, and selt him a score o' gimmers[1] for a jewel he had stown frae the turban o' a Turk that was getting fu' wi' Prester John. Sic dancin!

> "It was an Abyssinian maid,
> And on a dulcimer she play'd,
> Singing of Mount Abora!"

Then what a drove o' camels, and dromedaries, and elephants, "indorsed with towers!" Lions, and tigers, and panthers, and hunting-leopards, in cages like cottages, sold and purchased by kings! And, in anither region o' the boundless Bazaar, eagles, vultures, condors, rocs, that nodded their heads far aboon the quadruped quadrillions, and flapped the sultry air into a monsoon with their wings.

Tickler. Sleeping or waking, North, the Shepherd is your match.

Shepherd. Ye ken I once thought o' writing a book of

[1] *Gimmer*—a two-year-old ewe.

dreams. Some o' murders, that would hae made Thurtell[1] appear a man of the utmost tenderness o' disposition—horrible natural events, that were catastrophes frae beginning to end—a' sorts o' night-meers——

Tickler. James, North's falling asleep—stir him up with a long pole.

[1] John Thurtell was executed in December 1823 for the murder of his fellow-gambler and black-leg, William Weare, on the 24th of the preceding October. In reference to this tragedy Mr Lockhart has the following entry in his *Life of Sir Walter Scott* (vol. ix., p. 251, 2d ed.):—"On the afternoon of the 28th of May 1828, Sir Walter started for the North, but could not resist going out of his way to see the spot where 'Mr William Weare, who dwelt in Lyon's Inn,' was murdered. His diary says, 'Our elegant researches carried us out of the high-road and through a labyrinth of intricate lanes, which seem made on purpose to afford strangers the full benefit of a dark night and a drunk driver, in order to visit Gill's Hill in Hertfordshire, famous for the murder of Mr Weare. The place has the strongest title to the description of Wordsworth,—

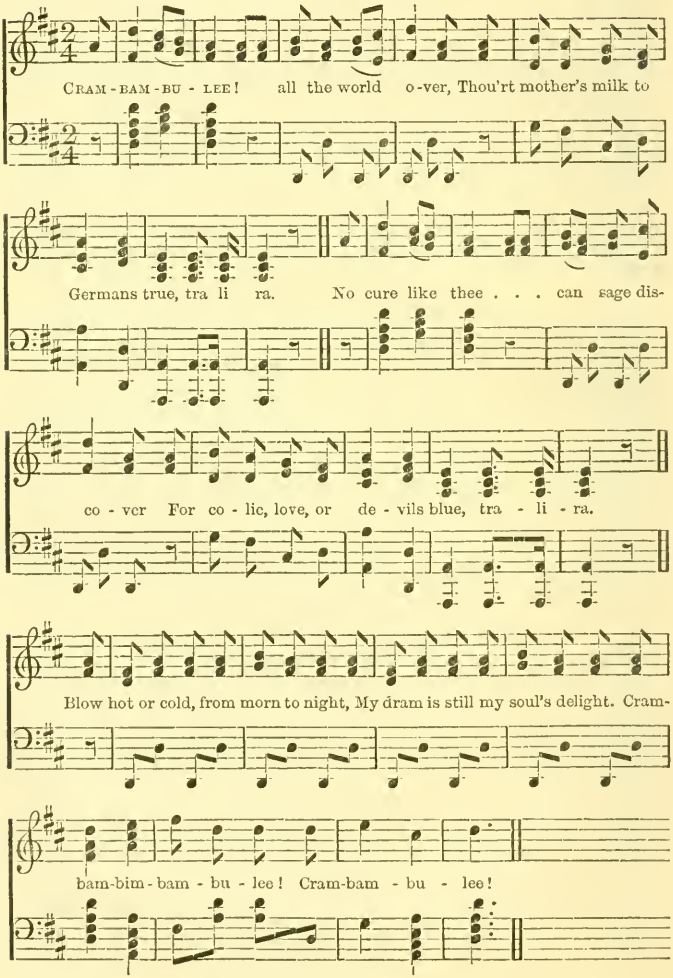
"A merry spot, 'tis said, in days of yore;
But something ails it now—the spot is cursed."

The principal part of the house has been destroyed, and only the kitchen remains standing. The garden has been dismantled, though a few laurels and flowering-shrubs, run wild, continue to mark the spot. The fatal pond is now only a green swamp, but so near the house that one cannot conceive how it was ever chosen as a place of temporary concealment for the murdered body. Indeed, the whole history of the murder, and the scenes which ensued, are strange pictures of desperate and shortsighted wickedness. The feasting, the singing,—the murderer, with his hands still bloody, hanging round the neck of one of the females,—the watch-chain of the murdered man, argue the greatest apathy. Even Probert, the most frightened of the party, fled no farther for relief than to the brandy bottle, and is found in the very lane, nay, at the very spot of the murder, seeking for the weapon, and exposing himself to the view of the passengers. Another singular mark of stupid audacity was their venturing to wear the clothes of their victim. There was a want of foresight in the whole arrangements of the deed, and the attempts to conceal it, which a professed robber would not have exhibited. There was just one shade of redeeming character about a business so brutal perpetrated by men above the very lowest rank of life; it was the mixture of revenge, which afforded some relief to the circumstances of treachery and premeditation. Weare was a cheat, and had no doubt pillaged Thurtell, who, therefore, deemed he might take greater liberties with him than with others. The dirt of the present habitation equalled its wretched desolation, and a truculent-looking hag, who showed us the place, and received half-a-crown, looked not unlike the natural inmate of such a mansion. She hinted as much herself, saying, the landlord had dismantled the place because no respectable person would live there. She seems to live entirely alone, and fears no ghosts, she says. One thing about this tragedy was never explained. It is said that Weare, as is the habit with such men, always carried about his person, and between his flannel waistcoat and shirt, a sum of ready money equal to £1500 or £2000. No such money was ever recovered; and as the sum divided by Thurtell among his accomplices was only about £20, he must, in slang phrase, have *bucketted his pals.*'"

North (*rubbing his eyes*). Well, since you insist upon it, here it goes.

SONG.

AIR—"*Crambambulee.*"



Hungry and chill'd with bivouacking,
We rise ere song of earliest bird—Tra li ra.
Cannon and drums our ears are cracking,
And saddle, boot, and blade's the word—Tra li ra.
" Vite en l'avant," our bugle blows,
A flying gulp and off it goes,
Cram-bam-bim-bam-bu-lee !—Crambambulee !

Victory's ours, off speed despatches,
Hourra ! The luck for once is mine—Tra li ra.
Food comes by morsels, sleep by snatches,
No time, by Jove, to wash or dine—Tra li ra.
From post to post my pipe I cram,
Full gallop smoke, and suck my dram.
Cram-bam-bim-bam-bu-lee !—Crambambulee !

When I'm the peer of kings and kaisers,
An order of my own I'll found—Tra li ra.
Down goes our gage to all despisers,
Our motto through the world shall sound—Tra li ra.
" Toujours fidèle et sans souci,
C'est l'ordre de Crambambulee !"
Cram-bam-bim-bam-bu-lee ! Crambambulee !

Tickler. Bravo ! One good turn deserves another.

THE MARCH OF INTELLECT. A NEW SONG.

TUNE—" *Through all the Employments of Life.*"

Oh ! Learning's a very fine thing,
As also is wisdom and knowledge,
For a man is as great as a king,
If he has but the airs of a college.
And nowadays all must admit,
In LEARNING we're wondrously favour'd,
For you scarce o'er your window can spit,
But some learned man is beslaver'd !
Sing, tol de rol lol, &c. &c.

We'll all of us shortly be doom'd
To part with our plain understanding,

For INTELLECT now has assumed
An attitude truly commanding!
All ranks are so dreadfully wise,
Common sense is set quite at defiance,
And the child for its porridge that cries,
Must cry in the language of SCIENCE.
Sing, tol de rol lol, &c. &c.

The WEAVER it surely becomes
To talk of his web's involution,
For doubtless the hero of thrums
Is a member of some institution:
He speaks of supply and demand
With the airs of a great legislator,
And almost can tell you off-hand,
That the smaller is less than the greater!
Sing, tol de rol lol, &c. &c.

The TAILOR, in cutting his cloth,
Will speak of the true conic section;
And no tailor is now such a Goth
But he talks of his trade's genuflection!
If you laugh at his bandy-legg'd clan,
He calls it unhandsome detraction,
And cocks up his chin like a man,
Though we know that he's only a fraction!
Sing, tol de rol lol, &c. &c.

The BLACKSMITH 'midst cinders and smoke,
Whose visage is one of the dimmest,
His furnace profoundly will poke
With the air of a practical chemist:
Poor Vulcan has recently got
A lingo that's almost historic,
And can tell you that iron is hot,
Because it is filled with caloric!
Sing, tol de rol lol, &c. &c.

The MASON, in book-learned tone,
Describes in the very best grammar
The resistance that dwells in the stone,
And the power that resides in the hammer;
For the son of the trowel and hod
Looks as big as the Frog in the Fable,
While he talks in a jargon as odd
As his brethren the builders of Babel!
Sing, tol de rol lol, &c. &c.

The Cobbler who sits at your gate
Now pensively points his hog's bristle,
Though the very same cobbler of late
O'er his work used to sing and to whistle.
But cobbling's a paltry pursuit
For a man of polite education—
His works may be trod under foot,
Yet he's one of the Lords of Creation!
Sing, tol de rol lol, &c. &c.

Oh! learning's a very fine thing!
It almost is treason to doubt it—
Yet many of whom I could sing,
Perhaps might be as well without it!
And without it my days I will pass,
For to me it was ne'er worth a dollar,
And I don't wish to look like an Ass
By trying to talk like a Scholar!
Sing, tol de rol lol, &c. &c.

Let schoolmasters bother their brains
In their dry and their musty vocation;
But what can the rest of us gain
By meddling with such botheration?
We cannot be very far wrong,
If we live like our fathers before us,
Whose Learning went round in the song,
And whose cares were dispelled in the Chorus.
Singing, tol de rol lol, &c. &c.

North (*standing up*). Friends—countrymen—and Romans—lend me your ears. You say, James, that that's a gran' jug; well then, out with the ladle, and push about the jorum. No speech—no speech—for my heart is big. This may be out last meeting in the Blue Parlour. Our next meeting in

AMBROSE'S HOTEL, PICARDY PLACE![1]

(North *suddenly sits down;* Tickler *and the* Shepherd *in a moment are at his side.*)

Tickler. My beloved Christopher, here is my smelling-bottle.—(*Puts the vinegarette to his aquiline nose.*)

[1] At this time Ambrose was about to shift his sign from Gabriel's Road, at the back of Princes Street, to a large tenement in Picardy Place, facing the head of Leith Walk. It will be seen, in the next *Noctes*, that the party again met in the old "Blue Parlour" in Gabriel's Road.

Shepherd. My beloved Christopher, here is my smelling-bottle.—(*Puts the stately oblong Glenlivet crystal to his lips.*)

North (*opening his eyes*). What flowers are those? Roses —mignonette, bathed in aromatic dew!

Shepherd. Yes; in romantic dew—mountain dew, my respected sir, that could give scent to a sybo.[1]

Tickler. James, let us support him into the open air.

North. Somewhat too much of this. It is beautiful moonlight. Let us take an arm-in-arm stroll round the ramparts of the Calton Hill.

[*Enter* Mr Ambrose, *much affected, with* North's *dreadnought;* North *whispers in his ear*, Subridens olli; Mr Ambrose *looks cheerful*, et exeunt omnes.

[1] *Sybo*—a leek.

V.

(FEBRUARY 1826.)

Blue Parlour.—Shepherd *and* Tickler.

Shepherd. I had nae heart for't, Mr Tickler, I had nae heart for't. Yon's a grand hotel in Picardy,—and there can be nae manner o' doubt that Mr Ambrose 'll succeed in it. Yon big letters facing doun Leith Walk will be sure to catch the een o' a' the passengers by London smacks and steam-boats, to say naething o' the mair stationary land population. Besides, the character o' the man himself, sae douce, civil, and judicious. But skill part from my right hand when I forget Gabriel's Road.[1] Draw in your chair, sir.

Tickler. I wish the world, James, would stand still for some dozen years—till I am at rest. It seems as if the very earth itself were undergoing a vital change. Nothing is unalterable except the heaven above my head,—and even it, James, is hardly, methinks at times, the same as in former days or nights. There is not much difference in the clouds, James, but the blue sky, I must confess, is not quite so very very blue as it was sixty years since; and the sun, although still a glorious luminary, has lost a leetle—just a leetle of his lustre. But it is the streets, squares, courts, closes,—lands, houses, shops, that are all changed—gone—swept off—razed —buried.

> "And that is sure a reason fair
> To fill my glass again."

Shepherd. Ony reason's fair enough for that. Here's to you, sir,—the Hollands in this house is aye maist excellent.

Mr Ambrose (*entering hesitatingly*). Gentlemen, as I

[1] See *ante*, p. 85, note.

understood you to say that Mr North is not to honour this Tavern with his presence this evening, perhaps my son had better put off his recitation.

Tickler. Anan!

Shepherd. Mr Tickler is not in the secret, Ambrose. Why, Mr Tickler, Master Ambrose has composed a poem, which he had intended to recite to us in Picardy Place. It is a welcome to the Hotel. Now, as I have declared my determination never to desert Gabriel's Road till this house is no longer in Ambrose's possession, it is a pity not to hear the youth's verses; so, if you please, though a little out of place, let us have them before next jug.

Tickler. Assuredly—assuredly. Show Master Ambrose in.

(*Enter* Master Ambrose.)

Shepherd. Hoo are ye, my fine little fellow? Come forward into the middle o' the room. Stretch out your right arm so—square your shouthers—haud up your head—take care o' your pronounciation—*et perge, puer.*

(Master Ambrose *recites.*)

Though the place that once knew us will know us no more,
And splendours unwonted arise on our view,—
Though no fond remembrance past scenes could restore,
Our dearly-loved parlour we still must deplore,
And remember the Old, while we drink to the New!

How oft in that parlour, so joyous and gay,
The laurel was wreath'd with the clustering vine;
While the spirit of Maga held absolute sway,
And the glorious beams of the bright god of day
Seem'd in envious haste the fair scene to outshine!

Oh! changed are the days, it may truly be said,
Since first we met there in our social glee,
For a faction then ruled with a sceptre of lead,
Debasing the heart, and perverting the head,
And enthralling the land of the brave and the free!

That sceptre is broken—that faction is gone,—
In scorn and derision we've seen it expire.
While the brightness of Maga has everywhere shone,
It has blazed on the altar, and beam'd on the throne,
And kindled a more than Promethean fire!

Of our honours and glories our children may tell,—
Be it ours the triumphant career to pursue,
Each foe of his King and his country to quell,
The darkness of error and fraud to dispel,
And laugh at the dunces in Yellow and Blue!

We have One who will stand as he ever has stood,
Like a tower that despises the whirlwind's rage,—
By time and by labour alike unsubdued,
He will still find the wise, and the fair, and the good,
Admiring the Wit, and revering the Sage![1]

And he who supreme in Arcadia reigns,
With his heart-stirring Doric our meetings will cheer;
The pride of our mountains and emerald plains,
The joy of our nymphs, the delight of our swains,
Rejoicing each eye, and refreshing each ear![2]

And the Hero of many a glorious field,
His best and his happiest hours will recall,
The sword and the pen alike powerful to wield,
With generous spirit disdaining to yield,
Except to the spirit that conquers us All![3]

And he who has ever, in danger and doubt,
To his glorious cause been so loyal and true,
Defying the Cockneys, the Whigs, and the gout,
His Io Triumphe! still boldly will shout,
And proudly will hear it re-echoed by You![4]

The year that approaches new triumphs will bring,
Entwining new wreaths for each bold loyal brow,—
And for many a year our new roof-tree will ring
With the voice that is raised for our country and King,
Inspired by the thoughts that awaken it now!

The days that are gone we can never regret,
While gilded with honour they rise on our view;
And when here in our power and our pride we are met,
Our dearly-loved parlour we ne'er shall forget,
But remember the Old, while we drink to the New!

Tickler. Most precocious! Pope did not write anything equal to it at thirteen. It beats the *Ode to Solitude* all to sticks. Are you at the New Academy, Master Ambrose?

[1] North. [2] Hogg.

[3] ODoherty — which *sobriquet*, it should be mentioned, was sometimes applied (as is the case here) to Captain Thomas Hamilton, author of *Cyril Thornton*, as well as to Dr Maginn. [4] Tickler.

Master Ambrose. No, sir—at the High School.

Tickler. Right. You live in the vicinity. Is it not a burning shame, Shepherd, that the many thousand rich and prosperous men who have been educated at the High School, cannot—will not—raise a sum sufficient to build a new Edifice on a better site?[1]

Shepherd. It disna tell weel.

Tickler. A High School there must be, as well as an Academy. Both should have fair play, and education will be greatly bettered by the generous rivalry. Never were there better masters in the High School than now—gentlemen and scholars all. One loses all patience to hear the gabble about Parthenons, forsooth, when about eight or ten thousand pounds is all that is wanted to build, on Hamilton's beautiful plan, a school for the education of the sons of the citizens of modern Athens. Thank you, Master Ambrose.—(*Exit High-School Boy.*) A fine, modest, intelligent boy!

Shepherd. Just uncommon. The Embro' folk I never could thoroughly understand, and yet I hae studied them closely in a' ranks, frae the bench to the bar, I may say, from the poupit to the pozzi.[2] They couldna build their ain College—they wunna build their ain High School; and yet, to hear them talk o' their city o' palaces, you would think they were all so many Lorenzoes the Magnificent.

Tickler. The English laugh at us. Look at London—look at Liverpool. Is money wanted for any noble purpose? In a single day, you have hundreds of thousands.

Shepherd. Come, come—let us be in better humour. Is the oysters verra gude this season? I shanna stir frae this chair till I hae devoored five score o' them. That's just my allowance on coming in frae the kintra.

Tickler. James, that is a most superb cloak. Is the clasp pure gold? You are like an officer of Hussars—like one of the Prince's Own. Spurs too, I protest!

Shepherd. Sit closer, Mr Tickler, sit closer, man; light

[1] The new Edinburgh Academy was established in 1825. The High School dates from 1519. After having stood for many years at the foot of Infirmary Street, it was removed to a "better site" on the Calton Hill in 1825, where Hamilton's "beautiful plan" now stands realised.

[2] Certain dungeons sunk in the thick walls of the North Bridge, and dedicated to somewhat ignoble purposes, are (or were) called *Pozzi*. For a curious account of them, see *Blackwood's Magazine*, vol. iii. p. 202.

your cigar, and puff away like a steam-engine—though ye ken I just detest smokin;—for I hae a secret to communicate—a secret o' some pith and moment, Mr Tickler; and I want to see your face in a' the strength o' its maist natural expression, when I am lettin you intil't.—Fill your glass, sir.

Tickler. Don't tell it to me, James—don't tell it to me; for the greatest enjoyment I have in this life is to let out a secret—especially if it has been confided to me as a matter of life and death.

Shepherd. I'll rin a' hazards. I maun out wi't to you; for I hae aye had the most profoun' respect for your abeelities, and I hae a pleasure in geein you the start o' the world for four-and-twenty hours.—I am noo the Yeditor o' *Blackwood's Magazine.*

Tickler. Angels and ministers of grace defend us!

Shepherd. Why, you see, sir, they couldna do without me. North's gettin verra auld—and, between you and me, rather doited—crabbed to the contributors, and—come hither wi' your lug—no verra ceevil to Ebony himsel;—so out comes letter upon letter to me, in Yarrow yonder, fu' o' the maist magnificent offers—indeed, telling me to fix my ain terms; and faith, just to get rid o' the endless fash o' letters by the carrier, I druve into toun here, in the Whusky, through Peebles, on the Saturday o' the hard frost, and that same night was installed into the Yeditorship in the Sanctum Sanctorum.

Tickler. Well, James, all that Russian affair[1] is a joke to this. Nicholas, Constantine, and the old Mother-Empress, may go to the devil and shake themselves, now that you, my dear, dear Shepherd, are raised to the Scottish throne.

Shepherd. Wha wad hae thocht it, Mr Tickler,—wha wad hae thocht it—that day when I first entered the Grassmarket, wi' a' my flock afore me, and Hector youf-youfin round the Gallow-Stane—where, in days of yore, the saints——

Tickler. Sire?

Shepherd. Nane o' your mockin—I'm the Editor; and, to prove't, I'll order in—the Balaam-box.

Tickler. James, as you love me, open not that box.—Pandora's was a joke to it.

[1] The "Russian affair" was the declinature by Constantine of the Russian sceptre, in favour of his younger brother Nicholas, who died on the 2d of March 1855.

Shepherd. Ha! ha! ha! Mr Tickler, you're feared that I'll lay my haun on yane o' your articles. O man, but you're a vain auld chiel; just a bigot to your ain abeelities. But hear me, sir; you maun compose in a mair classical style, gin you think o' continuing a contributor. I must not let down the character of the work to flatter a few feckless fumblers. Mr Ambrose—Mr Ambrose—the Balaam-box, I tell you—I hae been ringing this half-hour for the Balaam-box.

Mr Ambrose. Here is the Safe, sir. I observe the spider is still in the key-hole; but as Mr North, God bless him, told me not to disturb him, I have given him a few flies daily that I found in an old bottle; perhaps he will get out of the way when he feels the key.

Tickler. James, that spider awakens in my mind the most agreeable recollections.

Shepherd. Dang your speeders. But, Mr Ambrose, where's the Monthly Budget?

Mr Ambrose. Here, sir.

Shepherd (*emptying the green bag on the table*). Here, Mr Tickler. Here's a sight for sair een—materials for a dizzen Numbers. Arrange them by tens—that's right; what a show! I'm rich aneuch to pay aff the national debt. Let us see—"Absenteeism." The speeder maun be disturbed—into the Balaam-box must this article go. Gude preserve us, what a weight! I wonder what my gude auld father wad hae said, had he lived to see the day, when it became a great public question, whether it was better or waur for a country that she should hae nae inhabitants!

Tickler. Here's an essay on Popular Education.

Shepherd. Rax't ower.[1] Ay, ay, I see how it is—Institutions, Mechanic Institutions. That's no the way, in the ordinary coorse o' nature, that the mind acquires knowledge. As the general wealth and knowledge of the country increases, men, in all conditions, will of themselves become better informed. Then the education of the young will be better attended to—generation after generation that will be the case—till, feenally, education will be general in town and country, and the nation will be more enlightened, powerful, happy, and free. But now, they are putting the cart before the horse; and the naig will get reesty,[2] and kick aff the breeching.

[1] *Rax't*—hand it. [2] *Reesty*—restive.

Tickler. Here's a poem.

Shepherd. Fling it into the fire;—poetry's a drog. *Queen Hynde* is still in her first edition.

Tickler. The evil has wrought its own cure. But, on my honour, the verses are pretty. Another version of our favourite German song.—I'll sing them to the fiddle.

(TICKLER *sings to his Cremona.*)

The Rhine! the Rhine!—May on thy flowing river
The sun for ever shine!
And on thy banks may freedom's light fade never!—
Be blessings on the Rhine!
The Rhine! the Rhine!—My fancy still is straying,
To dream of Wilhelmine,
Of auburn locks in balmy zephyrs playing:—
Be blessings on the Rhine!
The German knight the lance has bravely broken
By lofty Schreckenstein;
The German maid the tale of love has spoken
Beside the flowery Rhine.
With patriot zeal the gallant Swiss is fired,
Beside that stream of thine;
The dull Batavian, on thy banks inspired,
Shouts,—Freedom! and the Rhine!—
And shall we fear the threat of foreign foeman?—
Though Europe should combine,—
The fiery Frank, the Gaul, the haughty Roman,
Found graves beside the Rhine.—
Germania's sons, fill, fill your foaming glasses
With Hochheim's sparkling wine,
And drink,—while life, and love, and beauty passes,—
Be blessings on the Rhine!

Shepherd. Faith, ye hae a gran' bow-hand, Mr Tickler. Ye wad be a welcome guest in the kitchen o' ony farm-house in a' Scotland, during the lang winter nichts. The lasses "would loup as they were daft, when ye blew up your chanter." Shame on the spinnet, and the flute, and a' instruments, but the fiddle.

Tickler. Many and oft is the time, James, that in my younger days I have set the shepherd's and farmer's family a-dancing,—on to the sma' hours. They would send out the bit herd laddie to collect the queans,—and they came all flocking in, just a

little trigger than when at work,—a clean mutch, or a ribbon round their foreheads,—their bosoms made cosh[1] and tidy—

Shepherd. Whisht, whisht. Ony mair verses amang the materials? Let us collec them a' into a heap, and send them to the cyook to singe the fools. What's that your glowering on, Sub?

Tickler. Sub?

Shepherd. Ay, Sub. I create you Sub-yeditor of the Magazine. You maun correc a' the Hebrew, and Chinese, and German, and Dutch, Greek and Latin, and French and Spanish, and Itawlian. You maun likewise help me wi' the pints, and in kittle words look after the spellin. Noo and then ye may overhawl, and cut down, and transmogrify an article that's ower lang, or ower stupid in pairts, putting some smeddum[2] in't,—and soomin a' up wi' a soundin peroration. North had nae equal at that; and I hae kent him turn out o' his hands a short, pithy, biting article, frae a long, lank, lumbering rigmarole, taken, at a pinch, out the verra Balaam-box. The author wondered at his ain genius and erudition when he read it, and wad gang for a week after up and down the town, asking everybody he met if they had read his leading-article in Ebony. The sumph thocht he had written it himsel! I can never hope to equal Mr North in that faculty, which in him is a gift o' nature; but in a' things else, I am his equal,—and in some, dinna ye think sae, his superior?

Tickler. I do. There seems to me something pretty in this little song. To do it justice, I must sing it.

TUNE—"*The Sailor's Life.*"

1.

Oh! often on the mountain's side
I've sung with all a shepherd's pride,
And Yarrow, as he roll'd along,
Bore down the burden of the song.
A shepherd's life's the life for me,
He tends his flock so merrily,—
He sings his song, and tells his tale,[3]
And is beloved through all the vale.

[1] *Cosh*—neat. [2] *Smeddum*—spirit.

[3] *Tells his tale.* Milton, in *l'Allegro,* uses this expression as a synonym for "Counts his flock;" here, by a singular misapprehension, the words seem to be used literally in the sense of "tells his *story!*"

2.

When Summer gladdens all the scene
With golden light and vesture green,
Too short appears the cheerful day,
While thus he pours his artless lay,
A shepherd's life's the life for me, &c.

3.

When winter comes with sullen blast,
And clouds and mists are gathering fast,
He folds his plaid, and on the hill
His blithesome song is with him still—
A shepherd's life's the life for me, &c.

4.

And when at eve, with guileless mirth,
He cheers his humble, happy hearth,
The storm without may whistle round,
But still within the song is found—
A shepherd's life's the life for me, &c.

5.

Oh! envy not the palace proud,
With all its gaudy, glittering crowd;
For who would ever be a king,
When on the hill-side he could sing,
A shepherd's life's the life for me, &c.

Shepherd. Tut, tut!—it's wersh[1]—wersh as a potauto without saut. The writer o' that sang never wore a plaid. What for will clever chaps, wi' a classical education, aye be writin awa at sangs about us shepherds? Havers![2]—Let Burns, and me, and Allan Cunningham, talk o' kintra matters, under our ain charge. We'll put mair real life and love into ae line—aiblins into a word—than a' the classical callants that ever were at College.

Tickler. Well, well—here's a poem that may as well go into the fire-heap at once, without farther inspection.

Shepherd. For God's sake, haud your hand, Mr Tickler!—dinna burn that, as you houp to be saved! It's my ain haun-writin—I ken't at a' this distance—I'll swear til't in a court o' justice! Burn that, and you're my Sub nae langer.

Tickler. My dear Editor, I will sing it.

[1] *Wersh*—insipid. [2] *Havers*—jargon.

Shepherd. Na, you shanna sing't—I'll sing't mysel, though I'm as hoarse as a craw. Breathin that easterly harr is as bad as snooking down into your hawse sae many yards o' woollen. Howsomever, I'll try. And mind, nane o' your accompaniments wi' me, either o' fiddle or vice. A second's a thing that I just perfectly abhor,—it seems to me—though I hae as gude an ear as Miss Stephens[1] hersel—and better, too—to be twa different tunes sang at ae time—a maist intolerable practice. Mercy me!—It's the twa Epithaliums that I wrote for the young Duke o' Buccleuch's birthday, held at Selkirk the 25th of November 1825.[2]

AIR—"*Killiecrankie.*"

1.

Rejoice, ye wan and wilder'd glens,
Ye dowie dells o' Yarrow,
This is the day that Heaven ordains
To banish a' your sorrow;
Ilk forest shaw, an' lofty law,
Frae grief and gloom arouse ye,
What gars ye snood your brows wi' snaw,
An' look sae grim and grousy?

2.

What though the winter storm and flood
Set a' your cliffs a-quaking,
An' frost an' snaw leave nought ava
On your green glens o' braken?
Yet soon the spring, wi' bud an' flower,
An' birds an' maidens singing,
The bonny rainbow an' the shower,
Shall set your braes a-ringing.

3.

We saw our sun set in the cloud,
For gloaming far too early,
An' darkness fa' wi' eiry shroud,
While hearts beat sad and sairly;
But after lang an' lanesome night,
Our morn has risen mair clearly;
An' O to wan an' waefu' wight,
Sic blithesome morn is cheery.

[1] Afterwards the Countess of Essex.

[2] Hogg's munificent landlord, the present Duke of Buccleuch, born in 1806.

4.

This is the day that wakes our spring,
Our rainbow's arch returning;
This is the dawning sent by Heaven
To banish care and mourning.
O, young Buccleuch, our kinsman true,
Our shield, and firm defender;
To thee this day our love we pay,
Our blessings kindly render!

5.

O, young Buccleuch! O, kind Buccleuch!
What thousand hearts yearn o'er thee;
What thousand hopes await thy smile,
And prostrate lie before thee:
Be thou thy Border's pride and boast,
Like sires renown'd in story;
And thou shalt never want an host
For country, King, and glory!

Tickler. Beautiful, James, quite beautiful!

Shepherd. Mr Tickler, I think, considering all things, the situation I now occupy, my rank in society—and the respect which I have at all times been proud to show you and Mrs Tickler, that you might call me Mr Hogg, or Mr Yeditor? Why always James—simple James?

Tickler. A familiar phrase, full of affection. I insist on being called Timothy.

Shepherd. Weel, weel, be it so now and then. But as a general rule, let it be Mr Tickler,—Mr Hogg, or, which I would prefer, Mr Editor. Depend upon it, sir, that there is great advantage to social intercourse in the preservation of those mere conversational forms by which "table-talk" is protected from degenerating into a coarse or careless familiarity.

Tickler. Suppose you occasionally call me "Southside," and that I call you "Mount Benger"—

Shepherd. A true Scottish fashion that of calling gentlemen by the names of their estates. Did you ever see the young Duke? You nod, Never!—He's a real scion of the old tree. What power that laddie has ower human happiness!—He has a kingdom, and never had a king more loyal subjects. All his thousands o' farmers are proud o' him, and his executors; and that verra pride gies them a higher character. The clan

must not disgrace the Chief. The "Duke" is a household word all over the Border;—the bairns hear it every day;—and it links us thegither in a sort o' brotherhood.[1] Curse the Radicals, who would be for destroying the old aristocracy of the land!—

WAT O' BUCCLEUCH.

AIR—"*Thurot's Defeat.*"

Some sing with devotion
Of feats on the ocean,
And nature's broad beauties in earth and in skies;
Some rant of their glasses,
And some of the lasses,
And these are twa things we maun never despise.
But down with the praises
Of lilies and daisies,
Of posies and roses the like never grew:
That flimsy inditing
That poets delight in,
They've coined for a havering half-witted crew.

Chorus.

But join in my chorus,
Ye blades o' the Forest,
We'll lilt of our muirs and our mountains of blue;
And hollow for ever,
Till a' the town shiver,
The name of our master, young Wat o' Buccleuch.

Of Douglas and Stuart,
We'd mony a true heart,
Wha stood for auld Scotland in dangers enew;
And Scotts wha kept order
So lang on the Border,
Then wha heardna tell o' the Wats o' Buccleuch?
Now all these old heroes,
Of helms and monteros,
O wha wad believe that the thing could be true;
In lineage unblighted,
And blood are united,
In our noble Master, young Wat o' Buccleuch.
Then join in my chorus, &c.

[1] Nobly has the Duke of Buccleuch sustained the character here ascribed to him; and amply has he fulfilled the promise of his youth.

In old days of wassail,
Of chief and of vassal,
O these were the ages of chivalry true,
Of reif and of rattle,
Of broil and of battle,
When first our auld forefathers follow'd Buccleuch.
They got for their merit,
What we still inherit,
Those green tow'ring hills and low valleys of dew,
Nor feared on their mailings
For hornings or failings,
The broad-sword and shield paid the rents of Buccleuch.
Then join in my chorus, &c.

From that day to this one,
We've lived but to bless them,
To love and to trust them as guardians true ;
May Heaven protect then,
And guide and direct then,
This stem of the gen'rous old house of Buccleuch !
The Wats were the callans,
That steadied the balance,
When strife between kinsmen and Borderers grew :
Then here's to our scion,
The son of the lion,
The Lord of the Forest, the Chief of Buccleuch.

Chorus.

Then join in my chorus,
Ye lads of the Forest,
We'll lilt of our muirs and our mountains of blue,
And hollow for ever,
Till a' the tow'rs shiver,
The name of our Master, young Wat of Buccleuch.

There's a sang for you, Timothy. My blude's up. I bless Heaven I am a Borderer. Here's the Duke's health—here's the King's health — here's North's health — here's your health—here's my ain health—here's Ebony's health—here's Ambrose's health—the healths o' a' the contributors and a' the subscribers. That was a wully waught! I haena left a dribble in the jug. I wuss it mayna flee to my head—it's a half-mutchkin jug.

Tickler. Your eyes, James, are shining with more than their usual brilliancy. But here it goes. (*Drinks his jug.*)

Shepherd. After all, what blessing is in this world like a rational, well-founded, steadfast friendship between twa people that hae seen some little o' human life—felt some little o' its troubles—kept fast hald o' a gude character, and are doing a' they can for the benefit o' their fellow-creatures? The Magazine, Mr Tickler, is a mighty engine, and it behoves me to think well what I am about when I set it a-working. The Cautholic Question is the cause o' great perplexity to my mind, when I tak a comprehensive and philosophic view o' the history and constitution o' human nature.

Tickler. I never heard you, Mr Hogg, on the Catholic Question. I trust your opinions are the same with those of Mr North.

Shepherd. Whatever my opinions are, Mr Tickler, they are my own, and they are the fruit of long, laborious, deep, and conscientious meditation. I cannot believe, with Drs Southey and Phillpotts, and other distinguished men, that the spirit of Catholicism is unchangeable. Nothing human is unchangeable. I do not, therefore, despair of seeing—no, I must not say that, but of my posterity seeing—the Catholic religion so purified and rationalised by an unconscious Protestantism, that our Catholic brethren may be admitted without danger to the full enjoyment of all the rights and privileges of British subjects. That time will come, sir; but not in our day—no, not in our day. A century at the very least, perhaps two, must elapse before we can grant the boon of Catholic Emancipation.

Tickler. Just my sentiments.

Shepherd. No, sir, they are my own; and farther I say, that to emancipate the Catholics in order to destroy their religion, as is proposed many hundred times in the rival Journal, (blue and yellow), is pure idiotry. I shall, therefore, not suffer Catholic Emancipation.

Tickler. What think you of *Constable's Miscellany?*[1] You wish me to speak. The idea is an excellent one, entirely his own, and the speculation cannot fail of success. Thousands

[1] The first work in which the publication of "cheap literature" was projected and carried out on a considerable scale.

of families that cannot afford to buy books, as they are sold in their original shape, will purchase these pretty little cheap periodicals, and many a fireside will be enlightened. The selection of published works is judicious, and so in general is that of subjects to be treated of by Mr Constable's own authors; one most laughable exception there indeed is—History of Scotland, in three volumes, by William Ritchie, Esq.

Shepherd. What the deevil!—Ritchie o' the *Scotsman?*

Tickler. Why, it is rumoured, even Wigham the Quaker,[1] when he heard of it, cried out, "*Risus teneatis* AMICI?" Our excellent friend Constable committed a sad blunder in this; but he was speedily ashamed of it, and has scored out the most insignificant of all names from his list.

Shepherd. Scored out his name?—And will Ritchie[2] write three volumes of the History of Scotland after that?—I never heard of such an insult. Yet Mr Constable was in the right; —for only think for a moment of printing 15,000 copies of three volumes of a History of Scotland by William Ritchie! But Mr Constable may just drap the volumes a'thegether; for there will aye be a kind o' a disagreeable suspicion that Ritchie wrote them,—and that would be enough to damn the History, were it frae the pen of Dionysius Harlicarnensis.

Tickler. Dionysius Harlicarnensis!

Shepherd. The same. I ken a' about him frae Tennant o' Dollar, author of *Anster Fair.*[3]

Tickler. Here's Tennant's health, and that of *John Baliol*, his new tragedy.

Shepherd. With all my heart; but I wish people would give over writing tragedies. If they won't, then let them choose tragical subjects; let them, as Aristotle says in his Poetics, purge our souls by pity and terror, and not set us asleep. The Bridal of Lammermuir is the best, the only tragedy since Shakespeare—

Tickler. Try the anchovies. I forget if you skate, Hogg?

Shepherd. Yes, like a flounder. I was at Duddingston Loch on the great day. Twa bands of music kept cheering

[1] An oracle among the suburban Radicals.

[2] One of the editors of the *Scotsman* newspaper. Nothing worse, I believe, is known of him than that he was a keen Whig.

[3] Afterwards Professor of Oriental Languages in the University of St Andrews. He died in 1848.

the shade of King Arthur on his seat, and gave a martial character to the festivities. It was then, for the first time, that I mounted my cloak and spurs. I had a young leddie, you may weel guess that, on ilka arm; and it was pleasant to feel the dear timorous creturs clinging and pressing on a body's sides, every time their taes caught a bit crunkle on the ice, or an imbedded chucky-stane. I thocht that between the twa they wad never hae gien ower till they had pu'd me doun on the breid o' my back. The muffs were just amazing, and the furbelows past a' enumeration. It was quite Polar. Then a' the ten thousand people (there couldna be fewer) were in perpetual motion. Faith, the thermometer made them do that, for it was some fifty below zero. I've been at mony a bonspeil, but I never saw such a congregation on the ice afore. Once or twice it cracked, and the sound was fearsome, —a lang, sullen growl, as of some monster starting out o' sleep, and raging for prey. But the bits o' bairns just leuch, and never gied ower sliding; and the leddies, at least my twa, just gied a kind o' sab, and drew in their breath, as if they had ben gaun in naked to the dookin on a cauld day; and the mirth and merriment were rifer than ever. Faith, I did make a dinner at the Club-house.

Tickler. Was the skating tolerable?

Shepherd. No; intolerable. Puir conceited whalps! Gin you except Mr Tory[1] o' Princes Street, wha's a handsome fallow, and as good a skater as ever spread-eagled, the lave a' deserved drowning. There was Henry Cowburn,[2] like a dominie, or a sticket minister, puttin himself into a number o' attitudes, every ane clumsier and mair ackward than the ither, and nae doubt flatterin himself that he was the object o' universal admiration. The haill loch was laughing at him. The cretur can skate nane. Jemmy Simpson[3] is a feckless bodie on the ice, and canna keep his knees straught. I couldna look at him without wondering what induced the cretur to

[1] Mr Tory, although a tailor, had thews and sinews superior to his profession.

[2] Afterwards Lord Cockburn, one of the Judges of the Court of Session, and author of the *Life of Lord Jeffrey.*

[3] James Simpson, Advocate, a Whig, author of *A Visit to the Field of Waterloo,* which ran through many editions, and was republished with additions in 1852. He died in 1854, having done much by his philanthropical exertions to promote the welfare of his fellow-citizens.

write about Waterloo. The Skatin Club is indeed on its last legs.

Tickler. Did you skate, James?

Shepherd. That I did, Timothy—but ken you hoo? You will have seen how a' the newspapers roosed the skatin' o' an offisher, that they said lived in the Castle. Fools!—it was me—naebody but me. Ane o' my twa leddies had a wig in her muff, geyan sair curled on the frontlet, and I pat it on the hair o' my head. I then drew in my mouth, puckered my cheeks, made my een look fierce, hung my head on my left shouther, put my hat to the one side, and so, arms a-kimbo, off I went in a figure of 8, garring the crowd part like clouds, and circumnavigating the frozen ocean in the space of about two minutes. "The curlers quat their roaring play," and every tent cast forth its inmates, with a bap in the ae haun and a gill in the ither, to behold the Offisher frae the Castle. The only fear I had was o' my long spurs;—but they never got fankled; and I finished with doing the 47th Proposition of Euclid, with mathematical precision. Jemmy Simpson, half-an-hour before, had fallen over the *Pons asinorum.*

Tickler. Mr Editor, I fear that if in your articles you follow the spirit that guides your conversation, you will be as personal as Mr North himself. No intrusion on private character.

Shepherd. Private character! If Mr James Simpson, or Mr Henry Cockburn, or myself, exhibit our figures or attitudes before ten thousand people, and cause all the horses in the adjacent pastures to half-die of laughter, may I not mention the disaster? Were not their feats celebrated in all the newspapers? There it was said that they were the most elegant and graceful of volant men. What if I say in the next number of the Magazine, that they had the appearance of the most pitiful prigs that ever exposed themselves as public performers? Besides, they are by far too old for such nonsense. They are both upwards of fifty, and seem much older. At that time of life they should give their skates to their boys.

Tickler. My dear Editor, you are forgetting the articles. The devil will be here for copy . . . . . .

Mr Ambrose (*entering*). Did you ring, Mr North? Beg your pardon, did you ring, Mr Hogg?

Shepherd. No, Ambrose. But here,—take that poetry, and

tell the cook to singe yon. The turkey, you know. Let us have supper precisely at twelve.

Mr Ambrose (*receiving the poetry from Tickler*). Might I be allowed, gentlemen, to preserve a few fragments? English gentlemen are always speaking of the Magazine; and there are two very genteel gentlemen, indeed, and excellent customers of mine, Mr Hogg,—one of them from Newcastle, and the other all the way from Leeds,—one in the soft, and the other in the hard line,—who would esteem a fragment of manuscript from the Balaam-box an inestimable treasure.

Shepherd. Certainly, Ambrose, certainly. Keep that little whitey-brown article; but mind now you give all the rest to the kyuck.

Mr Ambrose (*inspecting it*). O yes, the whitey-brown article will do admirably.

Shepherd. You think so, do you, Ambrose? What is it about? Pray, read it up.

MR AMBROSE *recites.*

TUNE—"*To all you Ladies now at Land.*"

For once in sentimental vein
My doleful song must flow,
For melancholy is the strain,—
It is a song of woe!
Ah! he who holds the monthly pen
Is most accurst of mortal men!
With a fa, la, la, &c.

From month to month 'tis still his doom
To drag the hopeless chain,
For fair or foul, in mirth or gloom,
He shares the curse of Cain;
It is a woeful thing to see
A sight like this among the free!
With a fa, la, la, &c.

The devil comes at break of day,
The hapless wretch to dun,—
Oh! then the devil is to pay,
His work is not begun!
With heavy heart and aching head
He sends a hearty curse instead.
With a fa, la, la, &c.

But Christopher is not the man
His failings to excuse,
He must bestir as best he can,
And spur his jaded muse;
Oh! cheerless day and dreary night
The endless article to write!
With a fa, la, la, &c.

But ah! when Here he blithely sits,
How altered is his lot!
He clears his brow, unbends his wits,—
His cares are all forgot;
He sings his song, his bumper fills,
And laughs at life and all its ills,
With a fa, la, la, &c.

Shepherd. Dog on it, if I don't believe you are the author of the Whitey-brown yourself, Mr Ambrose.

Ambrose. No, Mr Editor. I could not take that liberty. In Mr North's time, I did, indeed, occasionally contribute an article. The foreign gentleman is ringing his bell; and, as he is very low-spirited since the death of Alexander,[1] I must attend him. Pardon me, gentlemen, whisky or Hollands?

Shepherd. Baith. What's the name of the Russian gentleman?

Ambrose. I believe, sir, it is Nebuchadnezzar.

Shepherd. Ay, ay, that is a Russian name; for they are descended, I hear, from the Babylonians. (*Exit* Mr Ambrose.) —Mr Tickler, here's a most capital article, entitled "Birds."[2] I ken his pen the instant I see the scart o't. Naebody can touch aff these light, airy, buoyant, heartsome articles like him. Then there's aye sic a fine dash o' nature in them—sic nice touches o' description—and, every now and then, a bit curious and peculiar word—just ae word and nae mair, that lets you into the spirit of the whole design, and makes you love both the writer and the written.—Square down the edges with the paper-folder, and label it "Leading Article."

Tickler. I wish he was here.

Shepherd. He's better where he is—for he's a triflin creatur when he gets a bit drink; and then the tongue o' him never lies.—Birds—Birds!—I see he treats only o' singing birds; —he maun gie us afterhend, Birds o' Prey. That's a grand

[1] Alexander, the Emperor of Russia, died in November 1825.

[2] This article, written by Professor Wilson, appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine*, vol. xix. p. 105.

subject for him. Save us! what he would mak o' the King o' the Vultures! Of course he would breed him on Imaus. His flight is far, and he fears not famine. He has a hideous head of his own—fiendlike eyes—nostrils that woo the murky air—and beak fit to dig into brain and heart. Don't forget Prometheus and his liver. Then dream of being sick in a desert place, and of seeing the Vulture-King alight within ten yards of you—folding up his wings very composedly—and then coming with his horrid bald scalp close to your ear, and beginning to pick rather gently at your face, as if afraid to find you alive. You groan—and he hobbles away, with an angry shriek, to watch you die. You see him whetting his beak upon a stone, and gaping wide with hunger and thirst. Horror pierces both your eyelashes before the bird begins to scoop; and you have already all the talons of both his iron feet in your throat. Your heart's-blood freezes; but notwithstanding that, by-and-by he will suck it up; and after he has gorged himself till he cannot fly, but falls asleep after dinner, a prodigious flock of inferior fierce fowl come flying from every part of heaven, and gobble up the fragments.

Tickler. A poem—a poem—a poem!—quite a poem!

Shepherd. My certes, Mr Tickler, here's a copy of verses that Ambrose has dropped, that are quite pat to the subject. Hearken—here's the way John Kemble used to read. Stop—I'll stand up, and use his action too, and mak my face as like his as I can contrive. There's a difference o' features, but very muckle o' the same expression.

O to be free, like the eagle of heaven,
That soars over valley and mountain all day,
Then flies to the rock which the thunder hath riven,
And nurses her young with the fresh-bleeding prey!
No arrow can fly
To her eyrie on high,
No net of the fowler her wings can ensnare:
The merle and thrush
May live in the bush,
But the eagle's domain is as wide as the air!

O to be fleet, like the stag of the mountain,
That starts when the twilight has gilded the morn;
He feeds in the forest, and drinks from the fountain,
And hears from the thicket the sound of the horn;

Then forward he bounds,
While horses and hounds
Follow fast with their loud-sounding yell and halloo;
The goats and the sheep
Their pasture may keep,
But the stag bounds afar when the hunters pursue.

O to be strong like the oaks of the forest,
That wave their green tops while the breezes blow high,
And never are fell'd till they're wounded the sorest—
Then they throw down their saplings, when falling to die!
The shrubs and the flowers,
In gardens and bowers,
May sicken, when mildew has tainted the field;
But the oaks ever stand,
As the pride of our land,
And to none but the arm of the lightning will yield.

Then, free in the world as the far-soaring eagle,
And swift as the stag, when at morning awoke,
Let us laugh at the chase of the hound and the beagle,—
Be sturdy and strong as the wide-spreading oak.
And we'll quaff wine and ale
From goblet and pail,
And we'll drink to the health of our comrades so dear;
And, like merry, merry men,
We'll fill up again;
And thus live without sorrow, and die without fear.

Tickler. I used sometimes to think that North gave us too little poetry in the Magazine. I hope you will improve that department, notwithstanding your order of incremation. People like poetry in periodicals, even although they abuse it. Here's a little attempt of my own, Mr Editor—if I thought it could pass muster.

Shepherd. Up with it. But don't, like Wordsworth, "murmur near the living brooks a music sweeter than their own." That is to say, no mouthing and singing like a Methodist minister. The Lake-poetry may require it—for it is a' sound, and nae sense; but yours is just the reverse o' that—Spout away, Southside.

Tickler. You know Campbell's fine song of the "Exile of Erin?"—I had it in my mind, perhaps, during composition.

TUNE—"*Erin Go Bragh.*"

There stood on the shore of far distant Van Diemen
An ill-fated victim of handcuffs and chains,
And sadly he thought on the country of freemen,
Where the housebreaker thrives, and the pickpocket reigns;
For the clog at his foot met his eye's observation,
Recalling the scenes of his late avocation,
Where once, ere the time of his sad transportation,
He sang bold defiance to hard-hearted law!

Oh! hard is my fate, said the much-injured felon;
How I envy the life of the gay Kangaroo!
I envy the pouch that her little ones dwell in,
I envy those haunts where no bloodhounds pursue!
Oh! never again shall I nightly or daily
Cut throats so genteelly, pick pockets so gaily,
And cheerfully laugh at the ruthless Old Bailey,
And sing bold defiance to hard-hearted law!

Oh! much-loved St Giles, even here in my sorrow,
How often I dream of thy alleys and lanes!
But sadness, alas! must return with the morrow,
A morning of toil, or of fetters and chains!
Oh! pitiless fate, wilt thou never restore me
To the scenes of my youth, and the friends that deplore me,
Those glorious scenes, where my fathers before me
Sang fearless defiance to hard-hearted law!

Where are my picklocks, my much-loved possession?
Minions of Bow Street, you doubtless could tell!
Where are the friends of my darling profession?
Thurtell and Probert, I hear your death-knell!
Oh! little we thought, when in harmony blended,
Of hearts thus dissever'd and friendships *suspended*—
That the brave and the noble should ever have ended
In being the victims of hard-hearted law!

Yet even in my grief I would still give a trifle,
Could I only obtain but a glass of *The Blue*,
With the soul-soothing draught all my sorrows I'd stifle,
Brethren in England, I'd drink it to you!
Firm be each hand, and each bosom undaunted,—
Distant the day when you're told you are "wanted,"—
Joyous the song which by Flashman is chanted—
The song of defiance to hard-hearted law!

Shepherd. I have heard waur things than that; it's very amusing,—nay it's capital—and its turn may come roun' in the Magazine in a year or twa.

Tickler. Allow me to express my gratitude. Have you seen, Mr Editor, Chambers's *Traditions of Edinburgh?*—a most amusing series of numbers, full of the best kind of antiquarianism. It has had a great sale, and it well deserves it. Chambers is a modest and ingenious man.[1]

Shepherd. That he is: I hae kent him for many years. But is it not all about auld houses?

Tickler. Not at all. There is much droll information about life and manners, and characters now gone by to return no more. I understand that Sir Walter Scott and Charles Sharpe[2] have both communicated anecdotes of the olden time, and that would stamp value upon a book of far inferior excellence. May I review it for an early number?

Shepherd. Ou ay. But what noise is that? Do you hear ony noise in the lobby, Mr Tickler? Dot, Dot, Dot! Dinna you hear't? It's awfu'! This way. O Lord! it's Mr North, it's Mr North, and I am a dead man. I am gaun to be deteckit in personating the Yeditor. I'll be hanged for forgery. Wae's me—Wae's me! Could I get into that press? or into ane o' the garde-du-vins o' the sideboard? Or maun I loup at ance ower the window, and be dash'd to a thousand pieces?

Tickler. Compose yourself, James; compose yourself. But what bam is this you have been playing off upon me? I thought North had resigned, and that you were, *bonâ fide*, editor? And I too! Am not I your Sub? What is this, Mount Benger?[3]

Shepherd. A sudden thocht strikes me. I'll put on the wig, and be the offisher frae the Castle. Paint my ee-brees wi' burned cork—fast, man, fast, the gouty auld deevil's at the door.

[1] Since this was written, Mr Robert Chambers, by his writings and publications, has contributed greatly to the dissemination of a cheap and edifying literature.

[2] Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe was a clever caricaturist, and replete with small gossip. He edited *Kirkton's Secret and True History of the Church of Scotland from the Restoration to the Year* 1678, and published in 1817 a small volume entitled *Metrical Legends and other Poems*, &c. For a sketch of him, see LOCKHART'S *Life of Scott*, vol. viii. p. 110, 2d edition.

[3] Hogg's territorial title from the name of his farm.

Tickler. That will do. On with your cloak. It may be said of you, as of the Palmer in *Marmion*,

> Ah me! the mother that you bare,
> If she had been in presence there,
> In cork'd eyebrows and wig so fair,
> She had not known her child.

(*Enter* North.)

North. Mr Tickler! Beg pardon, sir,—a stranger.

Tickler. Allow me to introduce to you Major Moggridge, of the Prince's Own.

North. How do you do, Major—I am happy to see you. I have the honour of ranking some of my best friends among the military—and who has not heard of the character of your regiment?

The Major (*very short-sighted*). Na—how do you do, Mr North? 'Pon honour, fresh as a two-year-old. Is it, indeed, the redoubtable Kit that I see before me? You must become a member of the United Service Club. We can't do without you. You served, I think, in the American War. Did you know Fayette or Washington, or Lee, or Arnold? What sort of a looking fellow was Washington?

North. Why, Major—Washington was much such a good-looking fellow as yourself—making allowance for difference in dress—for he was a plain man in his apparel. But he had the same heroic expression of countenance—the same commanding eye and bold broad forehead.

The Major. He didna mak as muckle use, surely, o' the Scottish deealec as me?

North. What is the meaning of this? I have heard that voice before,—where am I? Excuse me, sir, but—but—why, Tickler, has Hogg a cousin, or a nephew, or a son in the Hussars? Major Moggridge, you have a strong resemblance to one of our most celebrated men, the Ettrick Shepherd. Are you in any way connected with the Hoggs?

Shepherd (*throwing off his disguise*). O ye Gawpus! Ye great Gawpus! It's me, man—it's me! Tuts, man—dinna lose your temper—dinna you think I would mak a capital playactor?

North. Why, James, men at my time of life are averse to such waggeries.

Shepherd. Averse to waggeries! You averse to waggeries? Then let us a' begin saying our prayers, for the end o' the world is at hand. Now, that's just the way baith wi' you and Mr Tickler. As lang as you get a' your ain way, and think you hae the laugh against the Shepherd, a's richt—and you keckle, and you craw, and you fling the straw frae ahint the heels o' you, just like game-cocks when about to gie battle. Vow, but you're crouse:[1] but sae sune as I turn the tables on you, gegg you, as they would say in Glasgow—turn you into twa asses, and make you wonder if your lugs are touching the ceiling—but immediately you begin whimpering about your age and infirmities—immediately you baith draw up your mouths as if you had been eatin sourocks, let down your jaws like so many undertakers, and propose being philosophical! Isna that the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

North. I fear, James, you're not perfectly sober.

Shepherd. If I am fou, sir, it's nae been at your expense. But, howsomever, here I am ready to dispute wi' you on ony subject, sacred or profane. I'll cowp[2] you baith, ane after the ither. What sall it be? History, Philosophy, Theology, Poetry, Political Economy, Oratory, Criticism, Jurisprudence, Agriculture, Commerce, Manufactures, Establishments in Church and State, Cookery, Chemistry, Mathematics—OR MY MAGAZINE?

North. Your Magazine?

Shepherd (*bursting into a guffaw*). O Mr North! O Mr North! what a fule I hae made o' Tickler. I made him believe that I was the Yeditor o' *Blackwood's Magazine!* The coof credited it; and gin you only heard hoo he abused you! He ca'd you the Archbishop of Toledo.[3]

Tickler. You lie, Hogg!

Shepherd. There's manners for you, Mr North. Puir, passionate cretur, I pity him, when I think o' the apology he maun mak to me in a' the newspapers.

North. No, no, my good Shepherd—be pacified, if he goes down here on his knees.

[1] *Crouse*—brisk and confident.

[2] *Cowp*—overthrow.

[3] Is this not a mistake for the "Archbishop of *Granada*," in *Gil Blas*?

Shepherd. Stop a wee while, till I consider. Na, na; he maunna gang doun on his knees—I couldna thole to see that. Then, I was wrang in saying he abused you. So let us baith say we were wrang, preceesely at the same moment. Gie the signal, Mr North.

Tickler.
Shepherd. } I ask pardon.

North. Let us embrace. (*Tria juncta in uno.*)

Shepherd. Hurra! hurra! hurra!—Noo for the Powldowdies.[1]

[1] *Powldowdies*—oysters.

VI.

(APRIL 1826.)

Blue Parlour.—North, Shepherd, Tickler, Mullion.[1]

Shepherd. You may keep wagging that tongue o' yours, Mr Tickler, till midsummer, but I'll no stir a foot frae my position, that the London University, if weel schemed and weel conduckit, will be a blessing to the nation. It's no for me, nor the like o' me, to utter ae single syllable against edication. Take the good and the bad thegether, but let a' ranks hae edication.

Tickler. All ranks cannot have education.

Mullion. I agree with Mr Tickler,

> "A little learning is a dangerous thing.
> Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring."

Shepherd. Oh, man, Mullion! but you're a great gowk! What the mair dangerous are ye wi' your little learning? There's no a mair harmless creature than yoursel, man, amang a' the contributors. The Pierian spring! What ken ye about the Pierian spring? Ye never douked your lugs[2] intil't, I'm sure. Yet, gin it were onything like a jug o' whisky, faith, ye wad hae drank deep aneuch—and then, dangerous or no dangerous, ye might hae been lugged awa to the Poleesh-office, wi' a watchman aneath ilka oxter, kickin and spurrin a' the way, like a pig in a string. Haud your tongue, Mullion, about drinkin deep, and the Pierian spring.

North. James, you are very fierce this evening. Mullion scarcely deserved such treatment.

Shepherd. Fairce? I'm nae mair fairce than the lave o' ye.

[1] "Mullion" seems to have been a purely imaginary character, designed to represent very generally the population of Glasgow and its vicinity.

[2] *Douked your lugs*—plunged your ears.

A' contributors are in a manner fairce—but I canna thole to hear nonsense the nicht. Ye may just as weel tell me that a little siller's a dangerous thing. Sae, doubtless it is, in a puir hard-working chiel's pouch, in a change-house, on a Saturday nicht—but no sae dangerous either as mair o't. A guinea's mair dangerous than a shilling, gin you reason in that gate. It's just perfec sophistry a'thegether. In like manner, you micht say a little licht's a dangerous thing, and therefore shut up the only bit wunnock[1] in a poor man's house, because the room was ower sma' for a Venetian! Havers! havers! God's blessings are aye God's blessings, though they come in sma's and driblets. That's my creed, Mr North —and it's Mr Canning's too, I'm glad to see, and that o' a' the lave o' the enlichtened men in civilised Europe.

Mullion. Why, as to Mr Canning—I cannot say that to his opinion on that subject I attach much——

Shepherd. Haud your tongue, ye triflin cretur—ye maun hae been drinkin at some o' your caird-clubs afore you cam to Awmrose's the nicht. You're unpleasant aneuch when ye sleep, and snore, and draw your breath through a wat crinkly cough, wi' the head o' ye nid noddin, first ower your back and syne ower your breast, then on the tae shouther, and then on the tither,—but onything's mair preferable than yerk, yerkin at everything said by a wiser man than yoursel—by me, or Mr Canning, or Mr North, when he chooses to illuminate.

Mullion. What will Mr Canning say now about Parliamentary Reform, after that oration of his about Turgot and Galileo?

Shepherd. Turkey and Galilee! What care I about such outlandish realms? Keep to the point at issue, sir,—the edication o' the people; and if Mr Canning does not vote wi' me for the edication o' the people, confoun' me gin he'll be Secretary o' State for the Hame Department anither Session o' Parliament.

Mullion. The Foreign Department, if you please, Mr Hogg.

Shepherd. O, man, that's just like you. Takin haud o' a word, as if ony rational man would draw a conclusion frae a misnomer o' a word. There's nae distinction atween Foreign and Hame Departments. Gin Mr Canning didna ken the state o' our ain kintra, how the deevil, man, could he conduck the haill range o' international policy?

[1] *Wunnock*—window.

Tickler. I confess, Mr Hogg, that——

Shepherd. Nane o' your confessions, Mr Tickler, to me. I'm no a Roman priest. Howsomever—beg pardon for interrupting you. What's your wull?

Tickler. I confess that I like to see each order in the State keeping in its own place—following its own pursuits—practising its own virtues.

Shepherd. Noo, noo, Mr Tickler, ye ken the unfeigned respec I hae for a' your opinions and doctrines. But ye maunna come down upon the Shepherd wi' your generaleezin. As for orders in the State, how mony thousan' o' them are there—and wha can tell what is best, to a tittle, for ilka ane o' them a' in a free kintra? I've read in beuks that there are but three orders in the State—the higher, the middle, and the lower orders. Siccan nonsense!

Mullion. The best authorities——

Shepherd. I'll no speak anither word the nicht, if that cretur Mullion keeps interruptin folk wi' that nyaffing[1] voice o' him in that gate. I say there are at least three thousand orders in the State—ploughmen, shepherds, ministers, squires, lords, ladies, auld women, virgins, weavers, smiths, professors, tailors, sodgers, howdies, bankers, pedlars, tinklers, poets, editors, contributors, manufacturers, annuitants, grocers, drapers, booksellers, innkeepers, advocates, writers to the W.S., grieves, bagmen, and ten hundred thousand million forbye—and wull you, Mr Tickler, presume to tell me the proper modicum o' edication for a' these Pagan and Christian folk?

Tickler. Why, James, you put the subject in a somewhat new point of view. Go on. Mr Mullion, if you please, let us hear James.

Shepherd. I hae little or naething to say upon the subject, Mr North—only that it is not in the power o' ony man to say what quantum o' knowledge ony other man, be his station in life what it may, ought to possess, in order to adorn that station, and discharge its duties. Besides, different degrees o' knowledge must belong to different men even in the same station; and I am sure it's no you, sir, that would haud clever chiels ignorant, that they might be on a level wi' the stupid anes o' their ain class. Raise as high as you can the clever chiels, and the stupid anes will gain a step by their elevation.

[1] *Nyaffing*—small yelping.

Tickler. Why, James, no man knows the character of our rural population better than you do, and I may be a little prejudiced, say bigoted if you please, on the subject of education—so let us hear your sentiments at greater length.

Shepherd. I never like to talk lang on ony subject; but the truth is, Mr Tickler, that kintra folk in Scotland hae a', or maistly a', gude education already, and I wush to see gude made better. What wull you think, whan I tell you that in Ettrick there are three debatin societies?

Tickler. What the deuce do you debate about?

Shepherd. I'm no a member o' ony o' them, for I'm past that time o' life. They're a' young chiels; and they debate about doctrinal points o' religion and morals, and subjects interesting to men as members and heads o' families. I believe that nae harm comes o' sic societies. They are a' Calvinistic, and no sceptical—but on the contrar, they haud to the Scriptures, and are a' Bereans[1] in practice.

Tickler. They don't doubt of the authenticity, then—Tom Paine is not their Coryphæus?

Shepherd. Tom Paine! Na, na. They are gude kirk-goers, and keep a sharp ee on the minister in the poupit. That's ae grand distinction, I suspec, atween kintra readers and thinkers, and town anes. Your artisans and mechanics in towns, I fear, read wi' a different intent, and are no happy except when doubtin and makin holes in the wab o' their faith—and it's that that gars me anticipate less good frae their improvement.

North. When religion and worldly knowledge go hand in hand, then indeed will education benefit all classes; but in towns, James, they are divorced—ay, religion is left out of sight—our philanthropists tell us that it must be trusted to every man's own conscience.

Shepherd. And therefore it is forgotten, neglected, droops, and dies. But it's no sae in the kintra; an unbeliever there would be despised and hated, and nobody would trust him—nay, he would be hooted down wi' hisses and lauchter, and out-argued by ony auld woman that would yoke till him, till the coof would be tongue-tied like a dumbie.

North. James, I love to hear your voice. An Esquimaux would feel himself getting civilised under it—for there's sense in the very sound. A man's character speaks in his

[1] A small sect of Scottish dissenters.

voice, even more than in his words. These he may utter by rote—but his "voice is the man for a' that"—and betrays or divulges his peculiar nature.

Shepherd. I've often thocht and felt that, though I dinna recollect ever coming out wi't. What a weight o' wisdom in some auld men's voices! maist as muckle's in their een, or the shake o' their hoary heads! Years speak in the laigh, quate, solemn sound—you hear experience in a verra whusper—and what a lesson in a sich![1] Ay, Mr North, aften and aften hae I felt a' that, when sittin in a corner o' the room on the same chair wi' a bit lassie, when I hae chanced to hear the gudeman near the ingle speakin lown to the wife or weans, in advice or admonition. O! but the human voice is a mysterious instrument.

North. Do you like my voice, James? I hope you do.

Shepherd. I wad hae kent it, Mr North, on the Tower o' Babel, on the day o' the great hubbub. I think Socrates maun hae had just sic a voice—ye canna weel ca't sweet, for it's ower intellectual for that—ye canna ca't saft, for even in its laigh notes there's a sort o' birr, a sort o' dirl that betokens power—ye canna ca't hairsh, for angry as ye may be at times, it's aye in tune, frae the fineness o' your ear for music—ye canna ca't sherp, for it's aye sae nat'ral—and flett it cud never be, gin you were even gien ower by the doctors. It's maist the only voice I ever heard, that you can say is at ance persuawsive and commanding—you micht fear't, but you maun love't—and there's no a voice in all his Majesty's dominions better framed by nature to hold communion with friend or foe. But arena ye geyan sair cauldit the nicht? for you're hoarse and husky—yet that only gars you jirt out the words wi' additional smeddum, that gies an editorial authority to your verra monosyllables, and prophesies a gran' Number o' the Magazine for April.[2]

North. My son James, you know the weak points of the old man.

Shepherd. Filial piety, father—filial piety. O but some voices are just perfectly detestable. There's your wee bit sma', thin, peepin, cheepin, chirpin, wunnel-strae bit o' a vicey, that'll never be at peace—mouth sma', teeth sma', tongue sma', head sma', brain sma', the cretur himsel sma',

[1] *Sich*—a sigh.

[2] This is a good description of Professor Wilson's voice.

sma'—yet heich as Tintock[1] in his ain estimation, and hauding up the weel-shaved chin o' him in a maist bardy[2] and impertinent manner across the table in Mr Blackwood's chop.

North. That contributor, James, is dead.

Shepherd. Dead, say ye? The Lord be thanked! Then there's the skraigh. The chiel wi' the skraigh makes a soun', whenever he bursts out a-speakin, like a great big midden pootry fool purshued by a ggem-cock. The pootry keeps quate wi' his came,[3] and wattles in a hole till ggemy gies him a spur or twa on the hurdies, and then he skraighs out fire and murder, and doon the loan as fast's he can fugy, whiles rinnin, and whiles fleein, and whiles atween the twa, but a' the time skraighin till ye may hear him, on a lown[4] day, at every farm-house in the parish.

North. That contributor, James, is now in Italy.

Shepherd. Skraighin[5] in Florence, and Pisa, and Rome, and Napples. But there's a hantle mair o' them besides him in particular. What the deevil sud hinner onybody frae modulating their vice, and no terrifyin Christian people wi' sic fearfu' out-breakin o' inhuman soun's, waur than the nutmeg-graters in Brobdinag?—Shall I go on wi' the gamut o' grievances?

North. Perge, puer.

Shepherd. What think ye o' the penny trumpet?—The penny-trumpeter, ye ken, sir, is aye a Whiglet o' laigh degree—far doon the steps and stairs o' the pairty—just stannin wi' his bare soles on the rug. But the cretur's just perfectly happy—happier than either you or me, Mr North—wi' his musical instrument held to the mouth o' him, wi' an air o' as meikle grandeur as if he were a trumpeter in the Life Guards, and had blawn at Waterloo. The cheeks o' him are puffed up, like twa red apples a wee blistered on the fire, and the watery een o' him are glowering in his head like the last twa oysters left on the board—and then he gives vent to the thochts within him through the penny trumpet! A dry, cracket, fushionless,[6] withered, wooden, timmer, tantarara o' ae single note, that the puir, silly bit Whiglet takes for a tune!

North. I know him, James—I know him. He is Wellington's

[1] A hill in Lanarkshiro.
[2] *Bardy*—positive.
[3] *Came*—comb.
[4] *Lown*—calm.
[5] *Skraighin'*—screeching.
[6] *Fushionless*—without vigour.

great enemy in the *Edinburgh Review*, and about two years ago cut up Canning. But give us some more of the squad.

Shepherd. What think ye, sir, o' the lisp and the burr foregatherin in ane and the same mouth? You wonder gin he's an even-down idiot the man you're speaking wi'—the lisp's sae bairnly; but you soon begin to suspec a whilly-wha,[1] for the burr has a pawky[2] expression that's no canny; so finnin yourself no very comfortable between knave and fool, you tak the road, and aff to the Auld Town to denner.

North. James, the toothache, wi' his venomed stang, has been tormenting me all this evening. Excuse my saying but little; but I am quite in the mood for listening, and I never heard you much better.

Shepherd. I'm glad o't. Some folk when they speak remind me o' a callant learning to play upon the floot. Their tone is geyan musical, but wants vareeity, and though sweetish, is wersh, like the tone o' the floot. Then what puffin and spittin o' wind and water! Mercy on us! ye canna hear the tune for the splutter, unless you gang into anither room. What's that, sir, you're pittin into your mouth?

North. The depilatory of Spain, James, a sovereign remedy for the toothache.

Shepherd. Take a mouthfu' o' speerit, and keep whurlin't aboot in your mooth—dinna spit it out, but ower wi't—then anither, and anither, and anither—and nae mair toothache in your stumps than in a fresh stab[3] in my garden-paling.

North. James, is my cheek swelled?

Shepherd. Let's tak the cawnel, and hae a right vizy. Swalled! The tae side o' your face, man, is like a haggis, and a' the colours o' the rainbow. We maun apply leeches. I daursay Mrs Awmrose has a dizzen in bottles in the house—but if no, I'll rin mysel to the laboratory.

North. The paroxysm is past—proceed.

Shepherd. Weel—then there's the pig-sty style o' conversation—(though my name is Hogg, I'll no blink it)—grunt, bubble, and squeak. The pig-sty-style-o'-conversation talker begins like a soo, wi' his snoot nuzzlin in the dirty straw—you kenna weel what he's searchin after. By degrees he grows into a grunt, but no a verra muckle or lang ane—a kind o' intermittent grunt, sic like as the soo itsel maks as it pits its snout outower the door-way o' its

[1] *Whilly-wha*—shuffler. [2] *Pawky*—cunning. [3] *Stab*—stake.

sty, when it sees the wind or a wanderer gaun past the premises. As the chiel waxes warm in argument, then he's like the soo in full grunt, rampaging round and round the sty, like a verra lion o' the forest. Face him, and he gangs sae mad wi' anger that the grunt in perfec wudness breaks asunder into squeaks and squeals, as if he were treading down the wee piggies aneath his cloots.[1] The leeterary gentlemen sitting roun' the table in the middle chop[2] rise in a fricht, and, laying down the newspapers, mak for the front door.—Is that contributor dead too, sir? Oh! say that he's dead too!

North. No, James, I cannot say so. The monster is alive, and was in the shop this blessed day.

Shepherd. After a', sir, I dinna ken gin he's waur to thole than the great big mad Heelan bagpipe. You ken the Captain—and you've heard him speakin. Weel, then, just suppose a Heelan bagpipe gane mad, and broken out o' the mad-house, pursued by a dizzen keepers, every one wi' a strait waistcoat in his haun, and the Distracted Drone loupin intil No. 17 Princes Street, and never stoppin till he rowled awa through baith chops, richt into the Sanctum Sanctorum—a' the while yelling, and shrieking, and groaning a gathering o' a' the clans o' the Bulls o' Bashan.

North. Oh! James! James! Captain M'Turk is still alive. Apoplexy has no more power over his life than that fall he got last winter out of a fourth-flat window. Here he was in the shop this day with his broad purpled Gaelic face; and the moment he began to speak, although all the double doors between him and us were shut, we thought it was the competition of pipers. We could endure him in Glenmore—but oh! James! think of the Captain in an adjacent room only twenty feet by fifteen! Several large spiders plumped down in terror from the roof, with broken suspension-gear, on the Leading Article—and the mouse I have tamed, so that he will nibble a crumb out of our Troy-defending right hand, leapt off the green table in trepidation, as if scared by a visionary grimalkin. But are you as difficult to please, James, with faces as with voices?

Shepherd. Ten times waur. There's no ae man's face amang a hunder that I can thole. It's no features, though they're

[1] *Cloots*—hoofs. [2] *Chop*—shop.

bad aneuch in general, but the expression that makes me skunner.[1] There are four kinds o' expression mair especially odious—conçate, cunning, malice, and hypocrisy—and you would wonder how prevalent they are in a Christian country. First, Conçate. The cretur's face smirks, and smiles, and salutes you, and seems doing justice to your genius. You are put aff your guard, and think him agreeable. But a' at ance the expression glowers on you, and you see it's conçate. The cauldrifed cretur has never read a word o' the *Queen's Wake* in his days, and is pawtroneezin the Shepherd. He nods when you speak, and cries Ha! ha! ha! as if you wanted the encouragement o' him, and the like o' him—and asks you, aiblins, to twa-three potawtoes and a poached egg smoored in speenage at sooper, to meet half-a-dozen auld women, a writer o' sharawds, and some misses wi' albums. That's the conçated face.

North. Ex-editors of defunct magazines and journals—briefless advocates, with some small sinecure office—authors of pamphlets about canals, railroads, and gas-lights, and phrenologers.

Shepherd. Ay, and mony mair beside. Second, Cunning. You canna get a steady look o' his een, and only the whites o' them are visible. He's aye wink, winkin, and turning awa his face, and pu'ing his hat ower his broos. About five minutes after you hae answered a question, he refers to your answer, as if he had taen it doon in short haun, although at the time he never seemed to heed or hear't—and puts constructions upon wee bit senseless words, that served to eke out a sentence into grammar—and draws conclusions as to your political, and religious, and moral opinions, frae sic downright havers as a man generally speaks in a forenoon in the chop. As for his ain opinions—na, na—he'll no let them out; and after askin you a hundred ill-mannered questions, he pretends to be dull o' hearin when you speer the simplest ane at him, or else changes the discourse, or bamboozles you wi' a vocabulary o' mere words, or comes out wi' the biggest brazen-faced lee that ever crawled across a table. A' the while—oh, man! the face o' him looks cunnin, cunnin—and I could just spit in't, when I think sic treatment possible frae man to man. That's the cunnin face.

[1] *Skunner*—shudder with disgust.

North. Malice?

Shepherd. The corners o' the mouth drawn doon, sae that the mouth is a curve or a crescent. When he lauchs, there's nae noise, and a kind o' toss o' his head. The brow just aboon his een's wrinkled—no furrowed, for only the nobler passions plough—but swarmin wi' beggarly wrinkles—a restless, sneerin, and red ee, a wee bludeshot, geyan piercin, but noo and than wi' a feared look, and never happy. The nose o' him raither hyuckit,[1] and aften a drap at the neb o't; for he's nae that weel, and subject to headaches. He shakes hauns wi' you as if you had the plague; and as for his ain haun, it's cauld and clammy as a bunch o' cawndle-dowps. The hail countenance is sickly and cadaverous; and if I'm no mistaen, his breath has a bad smell; for malice has aye a weak digestion, and the puir yellow deevil's aften sick, sick.

North. Hypocrisy, James?

Shepherd. A smooth, smug, oily physiognomy, wi' lang, lank, black hair. The cheeks never muve, nae mair than gin they were brods; and there is a preceese sedateness about the mouth, that wadna be sae very ugly if you didna ken it was a' put on for some end, and contrairy to the laws o' nature. It maun be contrairy to the laws o' nature to haud fast the lips o' your mouth like them o' a vice in a smiddy: for the mouth is formed to be aye openin and shuttin again, and there's a thoosand opportunities for baith in the coorse o' a day—eatin, drinkin, talkin, lauchin, smilin, yawnin, gapin, starin wi' your mouth open at a strange-lookin chiel, or ony ither phenomenon, waitin for onybody gaun to speak, catchin flees, girnin, breathin, and sleepin, waukin, or haf-flins and atween the twa, hearkening to a sermon; in short, I scarcely ken when your mouth sudna be either wide or a wee open, savin and exceptin when you gang into the dookin and try the divin.

North. Hark, hark, James—you have overrun the scent—the hypocrite has stole away. Tally-ho, tally-ho—yonder he goes, all in black, round the corner o' the kirk.

Shepherd. His een are aften a licht grey, like that o' a twa-days-pooked grozet[2]—and afraid they may be seen through. Look at him; lo, he half closes them, as if he were aye praying, or gaun to pray, and then lifts them up, wi' a

[1] *Hyuckit*—hooked. [2] *Grozet*—gooseberry.

slaw shake or whawmel o' the head—lifts them up audaciously to Heaven.

North. Excuse exterior, James—he is probably a pure-minded, pure-living man.

Shepherd. He pure leevin—the clarty cretur! Just soomin in the sensuality o' ane and a' o' the appeteets! O man! gin ye but saw him eatin! The fat o' hens comes oozing through his cheeks—and the cheek-banes, or the jaw-banes, I never could mak out which, make a regular joint-like clunk every mouthfu' he devoors. He helps himself at ither folk's tables, wi' a lang airm, to the sappiest dishes—and never ca's on the lass for bread. He's nae bread-eater, nor potawtoes either—naithin but flesh will satisfy the carnal chiel within him—and afore he's half done denner, what wi' cleanin his hauns on't, and what wi' dichtin[1] his ereeshy gab, the towel athort his thees is a' crumpled up like a night-cap frae an auld gentleman's pow that wears pouther and pomatum.

North. James, James — remember where you are — no coarseness.

Shepherd. Then to see him sittin a' the time beside the verra bonniest bit lassie in a' the pairty! leanin his great, broad, yellow, sweaty cheeks, within an inch of her innocent carnations! Sweet simple girl—she thinks him the holiest o' men, and is blind and deaf to his brutalities. O save the lintwhite frae the houlat's nest! But the puir bonny boardin-school lassie has siller — a hantle o' siller — thousands o' poun's, aiblins five or sax—and in twa-three years ye see her walkin by her lane, wi' a girlish face, but white and sorrowful, leadin a toddlin bairn in her hand, and anither visible aneath her breast, nae husband near her, to gie her his arm in that condition—nae decent servant lass to help her wi' the wean—but quite her lane, no very weel dressed, and careless, careless, speakin to nane she meets, and saunterin wi' a sair heart down the unfrequented lanes, and awa into a field to sit down on the ditch-side weepin, while her wee boy is chasing the butterflies among the flowers.

North. Look at Tickler and Mullion yonder—playing at backgammon!

Shepherd. Safe us—sae they are! Weel, do ye ken, I never ance heard the rattlin o' the dice the haill time we were

[1] *Dichtin*—wiping.

speakin. You was sae enterteenin, Mr North—sae eloquent —sae philosophical.

Mullion. That's twa ggems, Mr Tickler. Hurra, hurra, hurra!

Shepherd. Od, man, Mullion, to hear ye hurrain that gate, ane wad think ye had never won onything a' your lifetime afore. When you hae been coortin, did ye never hear a saft laigh voice saying, "Ou ay?" And did you get up, and wave your haun that way roun' your head, and cry, Hurra, hurra, hurra, like a Don Cossack?

Mullion. Do not cut me up any more to-night, James—let us be good friends. I beg pardon for snoring yestreen—forgive me, or I must go—for your satire is terrible.

Shepherd. You're a capital clever chiel, Mullion. I was just tryin to see what effec severity o' manner and sarcasm wud hae upon you, and I'm content wi' the result o' the experiment. You see, Mr North, there's Mullion, and there's millions o' Mullions in the warld, whenever he sees me frichtened for him, or modest like, which is my natural disposition, he rins in upon me like a terrier gaun to pu' a badger. That's a' I get by actin on the defensive. Sometimes, therefore, as just noo, I change my tactics, and at him open-mouthed, tooth and nail, down wi' him, and worry him, as if I were a grew[1] and him a bit leveret. That keeps him quate for the rest o' the nicht, and then the Shepherd can tak his swing without let or interruption.

Tickler. I have not lost a game at backgammon these five years!

Shepherd. What a lee! The tailor o' Yarrow Ford dang ye a' to bits, baith at gammon and the dambrod, that day I grupped the sawmont wi' the wee midge-flee. You were perfectly black in the face wi' anger at the bodie—but he had real scientific genius in him by the gift o' nature the tailor o' Yarrow Ford, and could rin up three columns o' feegures at a time, no wi' his finger on the sclate, but just in his mind's ee, like George Bidder, or the American laddie Colburn.

North. Gaming is not a vice, then, in the country, James?

Shepherd. There's little or nae sic thing as gamblin in the kintra, sir. You'll fin' a pack o' cairds in mony o' the houses, but no in them a', for some gude fathers o' families think

[1] *Grew*—greyhound.

them the deevil's beuks; and sure aneuch, when ower muckle read, they begin to smell o' sulphur and Satan.

North. Why, James, how can old people, a little dim-eyed or so, while an occasional evening away better than at an innocent and cheerful game at cards?

Shepherd. Haud your haun a wee, Mr North. I'm no saying onything to the reverse. But I was sayin that there are heads o' families that abhor cairds, and would half-kill their sons and daughters were they to bring a pack into the house. Neither you nor me wull blame them for sic savin prejudice. The austere Calvinistic spirit canna thole to think that the knave o' spades should be lying within twa-three inches o' the Bible. The auld stern man wud as soon forgie the introduction into the house o' base ballads o' sinfu' love—and wishes that the precincts be pure o' his ain fire-side. Though I take a ggem o' whust now and then mysel, yet I boo to the principle, and I venerate the adherence till't in the high-souled patriarchs of the Covenant.

North. Perhaps such strict morality is scarcely practicable in our present condition.

Shepherd. What, do you mainteen that cairds are absolutely necessary in a puir man's house? Tuts! As for auld dim-eyed people, few o' them, except they be blin' a'thegither, that canna read big prent wi' powerfu' specs, and they can aye get, at the warst, some bit wee idle Oe[1] to read out aloud to its grannies, without expense o' oil or cawnel, by the heartsome ingle-light. You'll generally fin' that auld folk that plays cairds have been raither freevolous, and no muckle addickit to thocht—unless they're greedy, and play for the pool, which is fearsome in auld age; for what need they care for twa-three brass penny-pieces for ony ither purpose than to buy nails for their coffin?

North. You push the argument rather far, James.

Shepherd. Na, sir. Avarice is a failing o' auld age sure aneuch—and shouldna be fed by the Lang Ten. I'm aye somewhat sad when I see folk o' eighty haudin up the trumps to their rheumy een, and shakin their heads, whether they wull or no, ower a gude and a bad haun alike. Then, safe on us! only think o' them cheatin—revokin—and marking mair than they ought wi' the counters!

[1] *Oe*—grandson.

North. The picture is strongly coloured; but could you not paint another less revolting—nay, absolutely pleasant—nor violate the truth of nature?

Shepherd. I'm no quite sure; perhaps I micht. In anither condition o' life—in towns, and among folk o' a higher rank—I dinna deny that I hae seen auld leddies playing cards very composedly, and without appearin to be doin onything that's wrang. Before you judge richtly o' ony ae thing in domestic life, you maun understan' the haill constitution o' the economy. Noo, auld leddies in towns dress somewhat richly and superbly, wi' ribbons, and laces, and jewels even, and caps munted wi' flowers and feathers; and I'm no blamin them—and then they dine out, and gang to routes, and gie dinners and routes in return, back to hunders o' their friends and acquaintance. Noo, wi' sic a style and fashion o' life as that, caird-playing seems to be somewhat accordant, if taken in moderation, and as a quiet pastime, and no made a trade o', or profession, for sake o' filthy lucre. I grant it harmless; and gin it maks the auld leddies happy, what richt hae I to mint[1] ony objections? God bless them, man; far be it frae me to curtail the resources o' auld age. Let them play on, and all I wish is, they may never lose either their temper, their money, nor their natural rest.

North. And I say God bless you, James, for your sentiments do honour to humanity.

Shepherd. As for young folks—lads and lasses, like—when the gudeman and his wife are gane to bed, what's the harm in a ggem at cairds? It's a chearfu', noisy sicht o' comfort and confusion. Sic luckin into ane anither's hauns! Sic fause shufflin! Sic unfair dealin! Sic winkin to tell your pairtner that ye hae the king or the ace! And when that wunna do, sic kickin o' shins and treadin on taes aneath the table—aften the wrang anes! Then down wi' your haun o' cairds in a clash on the brod, because you've ane ower few, and the coof maun lose his deal! Then what gigglin amang the lasses! What amicable, nay, love-quarrels, between pairtners! Jokin, and jeestin, and tauntin, and toozlin—the cawnel blawn out, and the soun' o' a thousan' kisses! That's caird-playing in the kintra, Mr North; and whare's the man amang ye that wull daur to say that it's no a pleasant pastime o' a winter's

[1] *To mint*—to start.

nicht, when the snaw is cumin doon the lum, or the speat's roarin amang the mirk mountains?

North. Wilkie himself, James, is no more than your equal.

Shepherd. O man, Mr North, sir, my heart is wae—my soul's sick—and my spirit's wrathfu', to think o' thae places in great cities which they ca'—Hells!

North. Thank Heaven, my dear James, that I never was a gambler—nor, except once, to see the thing, ever in a Hell. But it was a stupid and passionless night—a place of mean misery, altogether unworthy of its name.

Shepherd. I'm glad you never went back, and that the devil was in the dumps; for they say that some nichts in thae Hells, when Satan and Sin sit thegither on ae chair, he wi' his arm roun' the neck o' that Destruction his daughter, a horrible temptation invades men's hearts and souls, drivin and draggin them on to the doom o' everlasting death.

North. Strong language, James—many good and great men have shook the elbow.

Shepherd. Come, come now, Mr North, and dinna allow paradox to darken or obscure the bright licht o' your great natural and acquired understandin. "Good and great" are lofty epithets to bestow on ony man that is born o' a woman—and if ony such there have been who delivered themselves up to sin, and shame, and sorrow, at the ggeming-table, let their biographers justify them—it will gie me pleasure to see them do't—but such examples shall never confound my judgment o' right or wrang. "Shake the elbow indeed!" What mair does a parricide do but "shake his elbow" when he cuts his father's throat? The gamester shakes his elbow, and down go the glorious oak-trees planted two hundred years ago, by some ancestor who loved the fresh smell o' the woods,—away go—if entail does no forbid—thousands o' bonny braid acres, ance a' ae princely estate, but now shivered down into beggarly parshels, while the Auld house seems broken-hearted, and hangs down its head, when the infatuated laird dies or shoots himself. Oh, man! isna it a sad thocht to think that my leddy, aye sae gracious to the puir, should hae to lay down her carriage in her auld age, and disappear frae the Ha' into some far-aff town or village, perhaps no in Scotland ava; while he, that should hae been the heir, is apprenticed to a writer to the signet, and becomes a money-scrivener i' his

soul, and aiblins a Whig routin at a public meetin about Queens, and Slavery, and Borough Reform, and Cautholic Emancipation, and ——

North. No politics, James, if you love me. No politics, my dear Shepherd.

Shepherd. I ance dreamed I was in ane o' thae Hells. Wud you like to hear my dream?

North. See, Mullion and Tickler are at the dice again!—Yes, James.

Shepherd. Oh, man! but they look ugly the noo, baith o' them. Only see Mullion's een—how gleg and glowrin in perfec greed and glory—for he's evidently gotten the better just noo—and the haill being o' the cretur is made up o' avarice, and vanity, and a' friendship for Tickler dead in his heart. Sin' a game o' backgammon for half-a-crown can produce a' that upon sic a real worthy chiel as the Secretary—think o' what they ca' hawzard for thousands o' gold guineas, and bars o' solid bullion!

North. But the dream, James, the dream!

Shepherd. I faund mysel suddenly, without warnin and without wonder (for wha wonders at changes even in the laws o' nature hersel in dreams?) in a lamp-lighted ha', furnished like a palace, and fu' o' weel-dressed company, the feck o' them sittin round a great green central table, wi' a' the peraphernalia o' destruction, and a' the instruments o' that dreadfu' trade.

North. You did not, I hope, James, recognise any of our friends there?

Shepherd. No, sir, I did not—yet although a' the faces were new to me, I didna feel as if they were new; but I joined amang them without askin questions wha they were, and was in a manner whirled about in the same vortex.

North. James, you surely did not play?

Shepherd. Nae questions. Some o' the company I took a likin to—fine, young, tall, elegant chiels—some o' them wi' black stocks, like officers out o' regimentals—and, oh! sir, wad you believe it, twa-three that I was sure were o' the clergy—and ane or twa mere bairns, that couldna be aboon saxteen,—a' these, and ithers beside, I felt my heart warm towards, and melt too wi' a sensation maist sickenin o' kindness and pity; for although they tried to be merry and care-

less atween the chances o' the game, their een and their features betrayed the agitation o' their souls; and I couldna but wonder why the puir deluded creatures pat themsels voluntarily into sic rackin misery.

North. These were the pigeons of your vision, James.

Shepherd. Mixed amang these were many middle-aged men, wi' naething verra kenspeckle[1] about them, but a steady dour look no to be penetrated, and a callous cruelty in their een, sic as I ance observed amang a knot o' Englishers at an execution in Embro', who aye kept whisperin to ane anither, when the Forger was stannin on the scaffold, and then lookin at him, and then rather lauchin—though he had been ane o' their ain gang afore condemnation.

North. Greeks, James, Greeks.

Shepherd. Then, oh, sir! oh, sir! only think on't; white silvery-haired heads belanging to men atween seventy and eighty years o' age, or perhaps ayont fourscore, were interposed amang the sitters round that terrible table. Some o' these auld men had as reverend countenances as ony elder o' the Kirk—high and intellectual noses and foreheads—some wi' gold-mounted specs—and they held the cairds in their hauns just as if they had been Bibles, wi' grave and solemn —ay, even pious expression. And ever and anon great shoals o' siller were becomin theirs, which they scarcely pretended to look at—but still they continued and continued playin, like images.

North. No dream that, James. You must have been in a Hell.

Shepherd. Whisht. But a' the scene began to break up into irregularity; for the soul in sleep is like a ship in an arm o' the sea amang mountains. The wund comes a hundred opposite airts, and gin she hasna let drap her anchor (equivalent to the soul lying dreamless), she has sair wark to get back to the open sea.

North. The police-officers, I presume, broke your dream.

Shepherd. No, Mr North, it was finally my ain distracted spirit that kicked and spurred itsel awake—but you shall hear. The goblins a' began to rage without ony apparent cause, and the haill pairty to toss about like trees in a storm, frae the bairns to the auld men. And a' at ance there was

[1] *Kenspeckle*—noticeable.

the flash and the crack o' a pistol, and a bonny fair-hair'd boy fell aff his chair a' in a low, for the discharge had set him on fire—and bluidy, bluidy was his pale face, as his ain brither lifted his shattered head frae the floor.

North. My God, James, did you not awake then?

Shepherd. Awake! I didna ken I was sleepin. I wush I had, for it was a dismal hour. Nane o' the auld grey-headed men moved a muscle—but they buttoned up their pouches—and tuk their great-coats aff pegs on the wa', and without speakin disappeared. Sae did the lave, only wi' fear and fright—and nane but me and the twa brithers was left,—brithers I saw they were, for like were they as twa flowers, the ane o' which has had its stalk broken, and its head withered, while the ither, although unhurt, seems to droop and mourn, and to hae lost maist o' its beauty.

North. There is truth—sad truth in dreams.

Shepherd. I heard him ravin about his father and his mother, and the name o' the place the auld folk lived in—and ane he ca'd Caroline!—his dead brither's sweetheart! We were on our knees beside the corpse, and he tore open the waistcoat and shirt, and put his hand to his brither's breast, in mad desperation o' hope to feel the heart beatin. But the last sob was sobbed—and then he looked up in my face, and glowered at me like ane demented, and asked me wha I was, and if it was me that had killed William. A' the time our knees were dabbled in the bluid—and a thousan' ghaistly lichts, and shapes, and faces, wavered afore my een, and I was sick as death.

Tickler. What the deuce are you two talking about there; and what's the matter with the Shepherd, his face is as white as a sheet?

Shepherd. I cried out to the puir fellow that I was the Ettrick Shepherd, and wud tak him to Eltrive, awa frae a' the horrors o' Hell and Satan. And then I thocht, "Oh, dear!—oh, dear!—what wud I gie if this were but a bluidy dream!"—And thank God, a dream it was, for I brake through the trammels o' sleep wi' a groan, and a shriek, and a shiver, and a shudder, and a yell,—and a happy man was I to see the sweet calm moon in the midnight lift, and to hear the murmur o' the Yarrow glidin awa through the silent beauty o' reposin Nature.

North. James, you have affected me—but let us think no more about it.—Have you heard Master Aspull,[1] James?

Shepherd. Weel, as sure's ony thing, Mr North, yon's a maist extraordinar prodigy. He's music personified. His entire soul is in his ear, and yon wee bit inspired hauns o' his mysteriously execute the bidding o' the genius within, and at aince delight and astonish.

North. Why don't young ladies perform on the piano better than they usually do, think ye, James? Do you generally admire their singing?

Shepherd. Me admire the singing o' the Edinburgh leddies? They hae neither taste nor feeling—all taucht singers, after some parteclar moddle for ilk parteclar tune, which they stick to like grim death, without e'er askin questions, like a parcel o' mockin-birds. Nae bursts o' native feeling, inspired at the moment by some turn in the strain—nae sudden pawthos to bring the tear into your ee—nae lively liltin awa like a rising laverock, when the hymn should brighten in the sunshine o' the soul's expanding joy—nae plaintive pause, maist like a faint, and then a dying away o' the life o' soun' into a happy and a holy death—but everlastingly the same see-saw—the same stap at the foot o' the hill, and the same scamper up—the same helter-skelter across the flat, and the same cautious ridin down the stony declivities. In short, their singing's perfectly tiresome, and gin it werena that I ken them itherwise, I should believe that they had nane o' them ony souls!

Tickler. Of all the staring troopers on the street I ever beheld in any metropolis, the Edinburgh ladies (old, young, and middle-aged) are the most barefaced and shameless. Is there anything remarkable in my appearance?

Shepherd. Naething ava, except your hicht and handsomeness, your fine ruddy cheeks and silvery locks—a star seen through a snow-cloud.

Tickler. All their eyes, black, blue, grey, and green, from the small blear to the great goggle, are thrust into my face. Some ladies look as they threatened to bite me,—others are only hindered, by the power of a good early education, from falling on my neck and kissing me,—some, with open mouths, are lost in astonishment, and forgetting all the world but me, capsize the dandies,—others go mincing by with suppressed

[1] Master Aspull, a musical phenomenon of that period.

titter or leering laugh—but not one of them all (and I mention the fact not in spite, but the deepest humility) passes by without making me the sole object of her ken. I wish to have the cause of all this explained—what have I said?—what have I done?—or am I, in good truth, the most extraordinary-looking man that has yet appeared in the world, and doomed to universal wonder all the days of my life?

Shepherd. Baith pairties are to blame. You see, Mr Tickler, you haud your head, as I observed, ower heigh—nane better entitled to do sae,—and I've seen you mysel, wi' a lang hat-crape hanging down your back, when you wasna in murnins,—that surtout is very yelegant, but no common on a man o' sixty,—you never walk slower than sax miles an hour, and that stick or cane o' yours is kenspeckle in a crowd, and would gie a clour[1] on a man's head aneuch to produce a phrenological faculty. A' thae things pitten thegither, and ithers besides, justifies the leddies, to a certain extent, o' their glowerin;[2] but still they're muckle to blame, for naething can justify impudence and immodesty, and a man canna help ha'in curious thochts about a woman whom he never saw atween the een afore, when she comes glowerin up to his very nose, wi' her handkerchief in her hand, just like a hizzie gaun to hang up a clout on a peg; and you hae to jump backwards to save yourselves frae rinnin foul o' ane anither, like twa cutters o' Leith smacks in the Roads.

North. I am so seldom on the streets, that I am no judge of the charges you bring against my fair towns-women. I love them with such a fatherly affection, that they may stare at me without offence; for I shall put it all down to the credit of my crutches.

Mullion. I should like to have been t'other day at the shooting of the elephant.[3]

[1] *Clour*—a lump raised by a blow. [2] *Glowering*—staring.

[3] His death is thus recorded in the monthly obituary:—"At his lodgings over Exeter Change, in his twenty-fourth year, Chuny!" Chuny's case gave rise to much discussion in the public prints, both before and after his decease. He was naturally of a warm temperament, and this, aggravated by his long confinement, had rendered him very irritable and dangerous. Cooling medicine, to the extent of a hundredweight of Epsom salts as an ordinary dose, had been administered in vain. Change of air, and new objects of interest, might perhaps have effected a cure, or at least have alleviated the more urgent symptoms; but an insurmountable difficulty presented itself. Chuny had been got "up stairs" when his proportions were comparatively slender; but

Tickler. Well, I should not. The murder read hideously. His death was necessary—but it was bunglingly inflicted.

North. I could not but be amused with my friend Brookes' letter in the newspapers, assuring the public that he had not eat soup made of part of the putrid elephant. A surgeon may do anything of that sort with impunity—and Brookes is a first-rate surgeon.

Tickler. I had no idea he was so sensitive. Elephant-feet are excellent.—*Experto crede Roberto.*

Shepherd. Tidbits! How are they dressed, Mr Tickler? Like sheep's-head and trotters, I presume. A capital dish for a Sabbath dinner, elephant-head and trotters. How mony could dine aff't?

Tickler. What a prime MART,[1] James?

Shepherd. What black puddins!—and oh! what tripe! Only think o' the leddy's hood and monyplies!—Then the marrow-banes! A' fu', it seems, o' a sort o' fluid, doubtless strang, and sappy, and esculent, and to be eaten wi' bread and a spoon. I'm gettin hungry—I've a great likin for wild beasts. Oh man! gin we had but wolves in Scotland!

Tickler. Why, they would make you shepherds attend a little better to your own business. How could you visit Edinburgh and Ambrose, if there were wolves in the Forest?

Shepherd. I wadna grudge a score o' lambs in the year—for the wolves would only raise the price o' butcher's meat—they would do nae harm to the kintra. What grand sport, houndin the wolves in singles, or pairs, or flocks, up yonder about Loch Skene!

Tickler. What think you of a few tigers, James?

Shepherd. The royal Bengal Teegger is no indigenous in Scotland, as the wolves was in ancient times; and that's ae reason against wushin to hae him amang us. Let the Alien

his bulk had increased so enormously during his imprisonment, that he could not have been got down again without taking down several houses. Fears were entertained that, in one of his obstreperous moods, he would demolish his own cage, and then proceed to liberate the lions and tigers in the adjoining apartments. The Strand became more formidable than an Indian jungle, and the only alternative was to put Chuny to death in the most summary way possible. A platoon of musketeers was drawn up against him in battle array. I am not aware that artillery was employed on the occasion; but it required one hundred and fifty bullets to despatch him. His dissection was itself a nine days' wonder.

[1] *Mart*—an ox killed at Martinmas, and salted for winter provision.

Act be held in operation against him, and may he never be naturaleezed!

Tickler. What, would you be afraid of a tiger, James?

Shepherd. Would I be afraid o' a teegger, Timothy? No half as afeard as you wad be yoursel. Faith, I wadna grudge geein a jug o' toddy to see ane play spang upon you frae a distance o' twenty yards, and wi' a single pat o' his paw on that pow o' yours, that ye haud so heigh, fracture your skull, dislocate your neck, crack your spine, and gar ye play tapsalteerie[1] ower a precipice into a jungle where the teegger had his bloody den.

Tickler. Would you give no assistance—lend no helping hand, James?

Shepherd. Ou ay, me and some mair wad come to the place, in a week or twa, when we were sure the teegger had changed his feedin grun', and wad collec the banes for Christian burial. But wad you be afraid o' teeggers, Timothy?

North. I once did a very foolish thing in the East Indies to a tiger. I was out shooting snipes, when the biggest and brightest royal tiger I have ever faced before or since, rose up with a roar like thunder, eying me with fiery eyes, and tusks half a foot long, and a tail terrific to dwell upon, either in memory or imagination.

Shepherd. I didna ken there had been snipes in the East Indies?

North. Yes, and sepoys likewise. The tiger seemed, after the first blush of the business, to be somewhat disconcerted at the unexpected presence of the future Editor of *Blackwood's Magazine;* and, in a much more temperate growl, requested a parley. I hit him right in the left eye, with number 7, and the distance being little more than five paces, it acted like ball, and must have touched the brain—for never surely did royal tiger demean himself with less dignity or discretion. He threw about twenty somersets, one after the other, without intermission, just as you have seen a tumbler upon a spring-board. I thought I should have died with laughing. Meanwhile I reloaded my barrel—and a wild peacock starting from cover, I could not resist the temptation, but gave away a chance against the tiger, by firing both barrels successfully against the Bird of Juno.

[1] *Tapsalteerie*—heels-over-head.

Shepherd. I've heard you tell that story a thousan' times, Mr North; but ye'll pardon me for sayin noo, what I only look'd before, that it's a downright lee, without ae word o' truth in't, no even o' exaggeration. You never killed a teegger wi' snipe-shot.

North. Never, James—but I rendered him an idiot or a madman for the rest of his life. But what do you think, James, about legislating for brute animals?

Shepherd. That's out o' the range o' my abeelities. I ken naething about legislation. But I do ken something about humanity—and cruelty to the dumb creation is practical blasphemy, and will not go unpunished. Perhaps, now that you ax me, it's better to teach it down, and fleech[1] it down, and preach it down, than fine it down, or imprison it down—and ae Chalmers[2] is worth a thousan' Martins.

Tickler. Habits of cruelty terminate almost of necessity in atrocious crimes. The carter who brutally flogs his horse will beat his wife.

Shepherd. What can ye say to a very puir blackguard, not worth ten shillings, who has coft[3] the leevin skeleton o' a horse for half-a-crown, that he may get a week's wear and tear out o't? He maun thump it, or it winna gang. The chiel may be sellin saut or bread, or some ither lawful eatables, and tryin to mainteen a family. It's a sair sicht to behold the raw and bloody skeleton,—but what can ye do? Is your conscience perfectly secure, when you tak the ragged deevil afore a magistrate, and fine him out o' his starvin wife's and weans' support? Mind that I'm no arguin—I'm only askin a question—nor do I want ony answer. But when you see a weel-fed hulkin fallow, savage, for nae reason at a', against the beast intrusted to him, knock him doun wi' a stick or a stane aff the causeway—and if you fractur his skull, and he binna married, you've performed a good action, and by takin the law into your ain hand, done the state some service.

North. Much evil is done the cause of humanity by indiscriminate and illogical abuse of pursuits or recreations totally

[1] *Fleech*—beseech.

[2] On the 5th of March 1826, a sermon on cruelty to animals was preached in Edinburgh by Dr Chalmers. For Martin, see *ante*, p. 31, note 2.

[3] *Coft*—bought. Germ. *gekauft.*

dissimilar. I doubt if any person can be really humane in heart, unless really sound in head. You hear people talk of angling as cruel.

Shepherd. Fools—fools—waur than fools. It's a maist innocent, poetical, moral, and religious amusement. Gin I saw a fisher gruppin creelfu' after creelfu' o' trouts, and then flingin them a' awa among the heather and the brackens on his way hame, I micht begin to suspec that the idiot was by nature rather a savage. But, as for me, I send presents to my freen's, and devour dizzens on dizzens every week in the family—maistly dune in the pan, wi' plenty o' fresh-butter and roun' meal—sae that prevents the possibility o' cruelty in my fishin, and in the fishin o' a' reasonable creatures.

North. It seems fox-hunting, too, is cruel.

Shepherd. To wham? Is't cruel to dowgs, to feed fifty or sixty o' them on crackers and ither sorts o' food, in a kennel like a Christian house, wi' a clear burn flowin through't, and to gie them twice a-week, or aftner, during the season, a brattlin rin o' thretty miles after a fox? Is that cruelty to dowgs?

North. But the fox, James?

Shepherd. We'll come to the fox by-and-by. Is't cruel to horses, to buy a hundred o' them for ae Hunt, rarely for less than a hundred pounds each, and aften for five hundred, to feed them on five or sax feeds o' corn *per diem*—and to gie them skins as sleek as satin—and to gar them nicher[1] wi' fu'ness o' bluid, sae that every vein in their bodies starts like sinnies[2]—and to gallop them like deevils in a hurricane, up hill and doun brae, and loup or soom canals and rivers, and flee ower hedges, and dikes, and palings, like birds, and drive crashin through woods like elephants or rhinoceroses—a' the while every coorser flingin fire-flaughts[3] frae his een, and whitening the sweat o' speed wi' the foam o' fury,—I say, ca' you that cruelty to horses, when the Hunt charge with all their chivalry, and plain, mountain, or forest, are shook by the quadrupedal thunder?

North. But the fox, James?

Shepherd. We'll come to the fox by-and-by. Is't cruel to men to inspirit wi' a rampagin happiness fivescore o' the flower o' England or Scotland's youth, a' wi' caps and red coats, and whups in their hauns—a troop o' lauchin, tearin,

[1] *Nicher*—neigh. [2] *Sinnies*—sinews. [3] *Flaughts*—flakes.

tallyhoin, " wild and wayward humourists," as the Doctor ca'd them the tither Sunday?

North. I like the expression, James.

Shepherd. So do I—or I would not have quoted it. But it's just as applicable to a set o' outrageous ministers, eatin and drinkin, and guffawin, at a Presbytery denner.

North. But the fox, James?

Shepherd. We'll come to the fox by-and-by. Is't cruel to the lambs, and leverets, and geese, and turkeys, and dyucks, and patricks, and wee birds, and ither animal eatables, to kill the fox that devoors them, and keeps them in perpetual het water?

North. But the fox, James?

Shepherd. Deevil take baith you and the fox—I said that we would come to the fox by-and-by. Weel, then, wha kens that the fox isna away snorin happy afore the houn's? I hae nae doubt he is, for a fox is no sae complete a coward as to think huntin cruel, and his haill nature is then on the alert, which in itsel is happiness. Huntin him prevents him fa'in into languor and ennui, and growin ower fat on how-towdies.[1] He's no killed every time he's hunted.

North. Why, James, you might write for the *Annals of Sporting.*

Shepherd. So I do sometimes—and mair o' ye than me, I jalouse; but I was gaun to ask ye, if ye could imagine the delicht o' a fox gettin into an undiggable earth, just when the leadin houn' was at his hainches? Ae sic moment is aneuch to repay half-an-hour's draggle through the dirt, and he can lick himsel clean at his leisure, far ben in the cranny o' the rock, and come out a' tosh and tidy by the first dawn o' licht, to snuff the mornin air, and visit the distant farm-house before Partlet has left her perch, or Count Crow lifted his head from beneath his oxter[2] on his shed-seraglio.

North. Was ye ever in at a death?—Is not that cruel?

Shepherd. Do you mean in at the death o' ae fox, or the death o' a hundred thousand men and sixty thousand horses? The takin o' a Brush, or a Borodino?

North. My dear James, thank ye for your argument. As one Chalmers is worth a thousand Martins, so is one Hogg worth a thousand Chalmerses.

[1] *How-towdies*—barn-door fowls. [2] *Oxter*—properly arm-pit: here 'wing.'

Shepherd. Ane may weel lose patience, to think o' fules being sorry for the death o' a fox. When the jowlers tear him to pieces, he shows fecht, and gangs aff in a snarl. Hoo could he dee mair easier?—and for a' the gude he has ever dune, or was likely to do, he surely had leeved lang aneuch.

Tickler. No man who can ride, and afford to keep a hunter or two, ever abused fox-hunting. The English clergy are partial to it, and sometimes partake of the pastime. Our Scottish ministers are too poor, and consequently content themselves with shooting or angling—especially the latter.

Shepherd. And the unfairest o' a' fishers that ever flogged water! Rather than that you should fish a fine pool, when they are afraid you'll gang by them, gin they taigle[1] at it themsels, ministers 'll no scruple to fling in turf torn frae the bank, to mak the water ower drumlie for the flee! Isna that mean and greedy? But ministers aye fish for the pat, and the gutsy weans.

Tickler. I know one minister, James, over in the kingdom of Fife, who would give the devil himself fair play at a match of angling; and that, considering his cloth and calling, glorifies his character as a sportsman.[2]

Shepherd. I ken wha you mean. Gin a' ministers were like him, Satan wad never daur to show his face in Scotland, frae ae end o' the week to the ither. For he canna stand integrity and the bauld face o't, but rins aff wi' his tail atween his legs, and never keeks ower his shouther till he has got back to the mouth o' his kennel, and gets the imps to rub him wi' sulphur; for the Deevil or Dog o' Hawdes has aye the distemper.

Tickler. The idiots, too, tell you that pugilism is the worst of all cruelty. Tom Crib's[3] health, if you please, Shepherd.

Shepherd. I haena the least objection. I'm no a fechtin man, and ken naething about pugilism. But twa stout young fallows daudin ane anither about for an hour wi' their neives, is no at a' like a dizzen deevils o' bill-dowgs in succession, tearin the nose, and lips, and tongue o' a bill. The man that says that the boxing's the warst o' the twa, is just a damned

[1] *Taigle*—linger.

[2] The Rev. Thomas Gillespie, minister of Cults; afterwards Professor of Humanity (Latin) in the University of St Andrews. He died in 1844.

[3] The ex-champion of the prize-ring.

idiwut — and should be taen afore a magistrate, and fined roundly, or sent to the treadmill, for an unprincipled, irreligious, and maist unnatural leear.

Tickler. What, James, do the Forest lads ever take a turn-up at a fair or wedding?

Shepherd. Ower aften—peace is best. But I ne'er heard fechtin ca'd cruel about the Border. They do gie ither desperate paiks—baith up and doun—for they're no nice that way; but gin there be ony cruelty in the business o' a black ee and a bluidy nose, our folk are sae stupid that they hae never yet fand it out. It's a' cant and effeminacy.

North. There is a good deal of ignorance in it. Many people have from their youth up been unaccustomed to all athletic exercises—and to them a box on the ear is a very awful concern. But they will lie back, three in a post-chaise, with heavy luggage, and miry up-hill roads, and snore through a fifteen mile-stage of a stormy winter night, without once thinking of the spavined, and wind-galled, and foundered pair of dying hacks, that have dragged them to a fat supper, and a warming-pan'd bed.

Shepherd. Farmers' horses are a very happy class of people —hard-workit to be sure, and at times sair galloped, when master or man has had a drap ower much; but weel fed and fodder'd, and treated like brithers. Cows, too, are very happy —and saw ye ever the like o' calves wi' their tails up, and covin[1] wi' their buddin foreheads, and funkin wi' their hind-legs, till they're breathless on the knowe? The rural brute population are happy. We farmers and shepherds mak them sae—or rather we help—for nature pours happiness into the hearts o' a' creturs, and they a' enjoy life till the inevitable but unapprehended day.

North. How much pleasanter, James, this our little *partie quarrè*, than yesterday's lumbering dinner-throng. There could not have been fewer than twenty?

Shepherd. I agree wi' you, sir. It's just the maist difficult thing in a' this world to ken hoo to keep up a conversation in a mixed pairty. Out o' ony dizzen there's aye three or four sure to poishon the evening. Ae cretur begins upon paintin, perhaps—no the Director-general,[2] for I like to hear him—and keeps deavin[3] ye wi' his buttery touches, and the Exhibitions

[1] *Covin*—butting. [2] See *ante*, p. 28, note. [3] *Deavin*—deafening.

frae the time o' the cheese and speerits, a' the way on, without interruption, to that o' the porter and red herrings. No anither topic the haill nicht but paintin. A' the lave o' us clean lose the power o' utterance, and sit fillin up tumbler after tumbler maist disconsolately, the toddy having lost a' taste, and a' power o' fuddlin, except mere stupefication o' the head.

Tickler. Or some infernal idiot begins upon Political Economy, and to his own refutation, without any demand, gives you a supply of raw material that fills the whole room with the smell of hides, blubber, and barilla. You might think him one of the "Twa Stirks," that, in absence of the Stot,[1] mislead the *Scotsman.* The dolt drivels his way between truism and paradox, feeble and fumbling, and with the intellect of a sticket man-milliner.

North. With the exception of about half-a-dozen, one or two of whom are of doubtful claims, all these gentry are the most vulgar and most vapid of praters and scribblers. Incapable of comprehending any ordinary and everyday subject, and knowing that they would expose themselves to detection and ridicule the moment they presumptuously opened mouth in company on such topics as gentlemen of education usually converse about, they think to shroud their imbecility and ignorance in—Science, the science of Political Economy!

Tickler. O the hideous jabber of the foolish knaves! But be you strong of stomach, and, as the Shepherd would say, dinna scunner—keep down your rising gorge—scrutinise the paltry prate of the pretenders—and you find them ignorant even of the common rules of arithmetic. They would fain fling flour in your eyes—or knock you down with a bar of bullion—but strip their tongues of this jargon, translate the gabble into English, and the would-be Malthus, or Ricardo, or Tooke, or Mushet, or Buchanan, stares round the company with his vacant and nonplussed eyes, and then vainly tries to

[1] In the exasperation of politics the name of "the Stot" had been applied, by the writers in *Blackwood's Magazine,* to Mr J. R. M'Culloch, at that time the editor of *The Scotsman,* and since then the author of *The Principles of Political Economy,* and other highly esteemed works. In after life Professor Wilson and Mr M'Culloch were thoroughly reconciled. The Professor lived to appreciate and acknowledge the many excellent qualities of the Economist, to whose talents and literary merits he had never at any time been insensible. I do not know precisely who the "Twa Stirks" were.

recover the balance of power by an undue absorption of the circulating medium.

North. In short, you laugh the man of Science into a sulky drunkard, and he and his Principles and Elements of Political Economy lie snoring together below the mahogany, till, getting offensive, mine host calls in the chairman from the corner, and bundling him into the vehicle, the room is ventilated,—export being in this case infinitely more advantageous than import, and society benefited by getting suddenly off hand so much native produce and raw material—to say nothing of Dugald and the carrying trade.

Shepherd. Ha, ha, ha!—I canna help lauchin, it soun's sae comical. I ken naething about Political Economy—but I hae observed ae thing in the kintra, and especially at the Farmers' Club at Selkirk, that the greatest gawpuses[1] are aye speakin about it, that can speak about naething else—and perhaps it would be fully as weel for them gin they were to read Hogg upon Sheep,[2] and Dr Findlater. They're a' hard drinkers, too, the maist o' them—bad managers—and break.

North. James, only think of an infuriated dunce in the *Scotsman* declaring that Sir Walter Scott is not entitled to offer his opinion to the public on the Currency![3]

Shepherd. Deil tak the idiwut—what for no?

North. The subject is above and beyond his powers! The obscure and insolent lout claims the subject as his own;—he, forsooth, has read all the authors, "from Smith to Ricardo," and calls upon the world to hold its mouth wide open, that he may administer a dose of doctrine.

Shepherd. Hoo does the fule ken what Sir Walter has read or no read? And oh! sir! can ony cretur in the *Scotsman* be really sae weak or wicket as to think himsel capable o' understandin ony ae[4] thing whatsomever that's ayont the grasp o' the Author o' Waverley's haun?

Tickler. About a thousand editors of pelting journals, and

[1] *Gawpus*—fool.

[2] *The Shepherd's Guide:* being a Practical Treatise on the Diseases of Sheep, and the best Means of preventing them. 8vo. Edinburgh, 1807.

[3] Soon after the great monetary crisis in 1825, Sir Walter Scott published three letters on the Currency, under the signature of Malachi Malagrowther. These letters were of essential service to Scotland, by causing Government to abandon their scheme of abolishing the Scotch £1 bank-notes, which they were on the point of carrying into effect.

[4] *Ony ae*—any one.

three times that number of understrappers "upon the establishment," think themselves able to correct the errors of Adam Smith. "We cannot help being surprised that Adam Smith," &c.; and then the dunce, shutting his eyes, and clenching his fists, without the slightest provocation, runs his numskull bang against the illustrious sage.

North. Adam never so much as inclines from the centre of gravity—while the periodical meal-monger, leaving only some white on the sleeve of the old gentleman's coat, which is easily brushed off by the hand, reels off into the ditch, as if he had been repelled from the wall of a house, and is extricated by some good-natured friend, who holds him up, dirty and dripping, to the derision of all beholders.

Shepherd. It's perfectly true, that a' the newspaper chiels speak out bauldly upon the principles and yelements o' the science—and though I'm wullin to alloo that there's some verra clever fallows amang them, yet oh! man, its mair than laughable, for it's loathsome, to hear them ca'in that ower kittle for Sir Walter that's sae easy to themselves, wha write, in my opinion, a sair splutterin style, as to language,—and, as to thocht, they gang roun' and roun', and across and reacross, back'ards and forrits, out o' ae yett[1] and in at anither, now loupin ower the hedges, and now bringin doun the stane-wa's,—sometimes playin plouter into a wat place up to the oxters, and sometimes stumblin amang stanes,—now rinnin fast fast, like a jowler on the scent, and then sittin doun on a knowe, and yowlin like a collie at the moon,—in short, like a fou fallow that has lost his way in a darkish nicht, and after sax hours' sair and unavailing travel, is discovered snoring sound asleep on the road-side by decent folk riding in to the market.

North. I shall probably have two pretty stiffish articles about public men and things in this Number; and therefore fear that I must delay the Currency Question for another month. I shall then, in my usual way, settle it for ever.

Tickler. Malachi Malagrowther is in the wrong, and the *Courier* scribe has done him.

North. Malachi Malagrowther is in the right, and the *Courier* prig has done himself. I have a twenty-page article in my head; and it will spring forth, full-grown, and armed like Minerva, from the brain of Jove.

[1] *Yett*—gate.

Shepherd. Ma faith! you and Malachi 'll skelp their doups for them, and gar them skirl.

North. O Lord, James! but the Chancellor of the Exchequer is a heavy joker! If his taxes were as heavy as his wit, the country would indeed be sorely burthened. There is a grace and brilliancy about all Canning says, and he never makes a pass without a palpable hit. Robinson[1] should stick to his own figures—arithmetical ones, I mean—yet there was "Hear, hear!" And the Chancellor cackled, flapped his wings, and crowed after the fashion of an unwieldy barn-door fowl, who sees that a game-cock, who would kill him at a single blow, is at a safe distance in another croft, attending to his own pursuits.

Tickler. I disagree entirely.

Shepherd. Haud your tongue, Mr Tickler. I'm quite convinced by Mr North's twenty-page article, that's to loup out like Minerva. Besides, eh! man, a' the Englishers, like gowks, canna see that Malachi has a way o' expressin himsel peculiar to the Malagrowthers; and they set about answering him wi' grave faces the length o' my arm.

North. Very silly, indeed, James—but there's a braw time comin. Tickler, have you been at the Exhibition?

Tickler. John Watson Gordon is great. His "Dr Hunter"[2] is equal to anything of Raeburn's.[3]

North. I doubt that.

Tickler. Well, then—next to Raeburn, John stands among our Scottish modern portrait-painters.

Shepherd. What for does every person cry out, "Ower mony portraits, ower mony portraits?" Can onything be mair pleasant than just a' at ance, when your freend is a thousand miles aff, or perhaps dead, to see the very cretur himsel on canvass, lookin at you wi' a smile or a frown?

Tickler. If people would not be so excessively ugly,

[1] Afterwards Viscount Goderich, and at a later period, Earl of Ripon. At this time he was Chancellor of the Exchequer.

[2] Dr John Hunter, professor of Humanity in the University of St Andrews. This eminent scholar and philologist, who published editions of several of the Roman Classics remarkable for the accuracy of their text, died in 1837, aged 91. The picture referred to in the text now ornaments the hall of the United College, St Andrews.

[3] Some of Sir Henry Raeburn's portraits have been seldom equalled, and never surpassed by those of any British artist. Born in 1756, he died in 1823.

James! Portraits are in general very unpardonable. Mr Colvin Smith forces upon you strong and striking likenesses, and I augur well of the young man when he shall have learned to draw and colour; but why represent all his gentlemen as half-seas over, and all his ladies as little better than they should be?[1]

North. Vile taste and feeling indeed! His pictures are clever and coarse; and woe betide the wight who passes through his hands, for he instantly loses all appearance of a gentleman.

Shepherd. Weel, I just think his pictures capital. It's a' nonsense you're talkin about leddies and gentlemen. Painters are ower fond o' flattery; and if his portraits are vulgar, as you ca't, how can Mr Smith help that, gin he wishes to be true to his original?

North. Simpson, in landscape, is delightful this year. He has an exquisite sense of the beautiful in scenery—and is a master of the principles of his art.

Tickler. Come, come, let us have no drivelling about pictures. There's the Shepherd himself, a much better painter than the best of the whole set.

North. Did you never use pencil or brush, James? I do not remember anything of yours, "by an Amateur," in any of our Exhibitions.

Shepherd. I've skarted[2] some odds and ends wi' the keelivine on brown paper—and Mr Scroope[3] telt Sir Walter they showed a gran' natural genius. I fin' maist diffeeculty in the foreshortnin and perspective. Things wunna retire and come forrit as I wush—and the back-grun' will be the fore-grun' whether I will or no. Sometimes, however, I dash the distance aff wi' a lucky stroke, and then I can get in the sheep or cattle in front; and the sketch, when you dinna stan' ower near, has a' the effect o' nature.

North. Do you work after Salvator Rosa, or Claude Lorraine, James?

Shepherd. I'm just as original in paintin as in poetry, and

[1] Mr Colvin Smith, then commencing his professional career, has since attained to very high eminence as a portrait-painter.

[2] *Skarted*—scratched.

[3] This accomplished gentleman and keen sportsman was the author of a finely illustrated work on deer-stalking.

follow nae master! I'm partial to close scenes—a bit neuk, wi' a big mossy stane, aiblins a birk tree, a burnie maist dried up, a' but ae deep pool, into which slides a thread o' water doun a rock—a shepherd readin,—nae ither leevin thing—for the flock are ayont the knowes—and up amang the green hills;—ay, anither leevin thing, and just ane, his collie, rowed up half-asleep, wi' a pair o' lugs that still seem listenin, and his closin een towards his maister. That's a simple matter, sir, but, properly disposed, it makes a bonny pictur.

North. I should have thought it easier to "dash off" a wide open country with the keelivine.

Shepherd. So it is. I've dune a moor—gin you saw't you would doubt the earth being roun', there's sic an extent o' flat—and then, though there's nae mountain-taps, you feel you're on tableland. I contrive that by means o' the cluds. You never beheld stronger bent—some o' the stalks thick as your arm—and places wi' naething but stanes. Here and there earth-chasms, cut by the far-off folk for their peats—and on the foreground something like water, black and sullen, as if it quaked. Nae birds, but some whaups[1]—ane fleein, and ane walkin by itsel, and ane just showin its lang neck amang some rushes. You think, at first, it may be the head o' a serpent—but there's nane amang our mosses, only asks, which is a sort o' lizards, or wee alligators, green, and glidin awa without noise or rustle intil the heather. Time—evening, or rather late on in the afternoon, when Nature shows a solemn—maist an awfu' stillness—and solitude, as I hae aften thocht, is deeper than at midnight.

North. James, I will give you twenty guineas for that keelivine sketch.

Shepherd. Ye'se hae't for naething, sir, and welcome—if you'll only fasten't against the wa' wi' a prin,[2] aboon the brace-piece o' your Leebrary-room. Let it be in the middle, and you sall hae Twa Brigs to hing at either side on't. The ane, a' the time I was drawin't, I could hardly persuade mysel wasna a rainbow. You see it's flung across a torrent geyan far up a hill-side, and I was sittin sketchin't a gude piece doun below, on a cairn. The spray o' the torrent had wat a' the mosses, and flowers, and weeds, and siclike, on the arch, and the sun smote it wi' sudden

[1] *Whaups*—curlews. [2] *Prin*—pin.

glory, till in an instant it burst into a variegated low, and I could hae taen my Bible-oath it was the rainbow. Oh! man, that I had had a pallet o' colours! I'm sure I could hae mixed them up prismatically aneuch,—yet wi' the verra mere, naked, unassisted keelivine (that day fortunately it was a red ane), I caught the character o' the apparition, and keepin my een for about a minute on the paper, shadin aff and aff, you ken, as fine as I could;—when I luckit up again, naething but a bare stane-and-lime Brig, wi' an auld man sittin on a powney, wi' his knees up to his chin, for he happened to be a cadger, and he had his creels. I felt as if it had been a' glamour. Sae muckle for ane o' the Twa Brigs.

Tickler. Now, James, if you please, we shall adjourn to supper. It is now exactly ten o'clock, and I smell the turkey. From seven o'clock to this blessed moment your tongue has never ceased wagging. I must now have my turn.

Shepherd. Tak your turn, and welcome. As for me, I never speak nane during supper. But you may e'en give us a soliloquy.

North. Ten o'clock! Now, James, eye the folding-doors—for Ambrose is true to a second. Lo, and behold!

(*The doors are thrown open.*)

Shepherd. Stop, Mullion, stop. What! will ye daur to walk before Mr North?—Tak my arm, sir.

North. My dear James, you are indeed my right-hand man. You are as firm as a rock. Thou art indeed the "Gentle Shepherd"——

Shepherd. Gentle is that gentle does—and I hope, on the whole, nane o' my freen's hae ony reason to be ashamed o' me, though I hae my failins.

North. I know not what they are, James. There—there—on the right hand—ay, say the grace, James.——Thank ye, James—we have been joking away, but now it behoves us to sit down to serious eating, while Timothy regales our ears with a monologue.

VII.

(JUNE 1826.)

Blue Parlour.

North, Tickler, Shepherd, Clerk of the Balaam-box, Mr Ambrose, Devil, Porters, and Incremators.

Shepherd. Safe us! I was never at an Incremation afore!

North. Mr Ambrose, bring in Balaam,[1] and place him on the table.

Mr Ambrose. May I crave the assistance of the Incremators, sir?—for he is heavier this year than I ever remember him, since that succeeding the Chaldee.

Shepherd. Is yon him ower-by in the window neuk? I'se tak haud o' ane o' the end-handles mysel. Come, you wee lazy deevil there, what for are you skartin your lug at that gate? get up and be usefu'.—Noo, Mr Ambrose, let us put a' our strength till't, and try to hoise him up, our twa lanes, ontil the table.

Tickler. My dear Shepherd, you'll burst a blood-vessel. Let me assist.

North. And me too!

Shepherd. Dinna loot[2] wi' that lang back o' yours, Mr Tickler. Pity me—I hear't crackin. There, it muves! It muves!—What for are you trampin on my taes, Awmrose?—Dinna girn that way in my face, Mr Beelzebub. Faith it gars us a' fowre stoiter.[3]

(Shepherd, Tickler, Beelzebub, *and* Ambrose, *succeed in placing the Balaam-box on the table.*)

North. Thank ye, gentlemen. Here is a glass of Madeira to each of you.

[1] See *ante*, p. 7, note 7. [2] *Loot*—stoop. [3] *Stoiter*—stagger.

Shepherd. North, rax me ower the Stork. There—that's a hantle heartsomer than ony o' your wines, either white or black. It's just maist excellent whisky, Glenlivet or no Glenlivet. But hech, sir, that's a sad box, that Balaam, and I'll weigh't against its ain bouk,[1] lead only excepted, o' ony ither material noo extant, and gie a stane.

North. Let the Incremators take their stations.

(*They do so, one at each side of the chimney. The Incremators are firemen belonging to the Sun Fire Office.*)

Devil!

Devil. Here!

North. Clerk of the B. B.!

C. B. B. Here!

North. Open Balaam.

C. B. B. Please, sir, to remember the catastrophe of last year. We must take the necessary precautions.

North. Certainly.—Mr Hogg, on opening Balaam, last year, we had neglected to put weight on the lid, and the moment the clerk had turned the key, it flew up with prodigious violence, and the jammed-down articles, as if discharged from a culverin, wafted destruction around—breaking that beautiful fifty-guinea mirror, in whose calm and lucid depths we had so often seen ourselves reflected to the very life—all but speech.

Shepherd. I could greet to think on't. A' dung[2] to shivers —scarcely ae bit big aneuch to shave by. But the same shinna[3] befa' the year—for I'se sit doun upon the lid like a guardian angel, and the lid 'll hae a powerfu' spring indeed, gin it whamles me ower after sic a denner.

(*The* Shepherd *mounts the table with youthful alacrity, and sits down on the Balaam-box.*)

North. Use both your hands, sir.

C. B. B. Beg your pardon—Mr North—there the key turns —Sit fast, Mr Hogg.

Shepherd. Never mind me—I'm sittin as fast's a rock.—

(*The lid, like a catapulta, dislodges the* Shepherd, *who alights on his feet a few yards from the table.*)

Tickler. My dear Shepherd, why, you are a rejected contributor!

[1] *Bouk*—bulk. [2] *Dung*—knocked. [3] *Shinna*—shall not.

Shepherd. Mercy on us, only see how the articles are bouncin about the Parlour! Put your foot, Tickler, on that ane, and haud it doon, for it's made o' parchment, and has breaken my shins. Look at yon ane, the wee wizened[1] yellow creatur, how it's loupin atower[2] the sopha, and then rinnin alang the floor like a moose, as if it were fain to escape aneath the door!—What's the maitter, Mr North? Dear me, what's the maitter?

North. The matter, James? Why, that cursed communication on the Catholic Question has, I verily believe, fractured my skull. Had it hit me a little nearer the temple, I should have been a dead Editor.

Shepherd. Wae's me! Wae's me! A fracture o' Mr North's skull. It maun indeed hae been a hard article that did that —but wha can we get to reduce it?

Tickler. Well—who could have thought they had such spunk in them? Perfect Robin Goodfellows all—hop, step, and jump was the order of the day—and a cleaner somerset never did I see than that performed a minute ago by yonder lubberly-looking article now lying on his side on the rug in the jaws of the Tiger, who in the attempt to swallow him is evidently worsted.

Shepherd. I haena had siccan a whamle[3] sin I was flung out o' a gig the summer afore last—but to be sure, in this case, there were nae reins to entangle about ane's legs, and nae wheels to gang shavin close by your lugs, wi' your head lying in a rut.—But let's rub your brows wi' vinegar, sir!

North. I warded off the force of the blow, James, with my crutch, else it might have been fatal.

Shepherd. Only to think o't, Mr North! But let's see what the article is? Burnin wull be ower gude for't. It shinna be burned, no it—Oh my prophetic soul! a Cockney Stink Pot!

North. Mr Ambrose, send in the scavenger.—Sorters, collect and arrange.

(*C. B. B., Sorters, and Devil, in full employment.*)

Shepherd. Thae Incremawtors hae a gran' effec! They canna be less than sax feet four, and then what whuskers! I scarcely ken whether black whuskers or red whuskers be

[1] *Wizened*—withered. [2] *Atower*—over. [3] *Whamle*—upset.

the maist fearsome! What tangs in their hauns! and what pokers! Lucifer and Beelzebub!

North. At home, James, and at their own firesides, they are the most peaceable of men.

Shepherd. I canna believe't, Mr North, I canna believe't; they can hae nae human feeling—neither sighs nor tears.

North. They are men, James, and do their duty.—He with the red whiskers was married this forenoon to a pretty delicate little girl of eighteen, quite a fairy of a thing—seemingly made of animated wax—so soft that, like the winged butterfly, you would fear to touch her, lest you might spoil the burnished beauty.

Shepherd. Married—on him wi' the red whuskers!

North. Come now, James, no affected simplicity, no Arcadian innocence!

Shepherd. You micht hae gien him the play the day, I think, sir; you micht hae gien him the play. The Incremawtor!

Devil. The sorters have made up a skuttlefu' o' poetry—Sir, shall I deliver up to Lucifer or Beelzebub!

North. All poetry to Beelzebub.

Shepherd. A' poetry to Beelzebub!! O wae's me, wae's me—Well-a-day, well-a-day! Has it indeed come to this! A' poetry to Beelzebub! I can scarce believe my lugs——

North. Stop, Beelzebub—read aloud that bit of paper you have in your fist.

Beelzebub. Yes, sir.

Shepherd. Lord safe us, what a voice! They're my ain verses too. Whisht—whisht.

(BEELZEBUB *recites.*)

THE GREAT MUCKLE VILLAGE OF BALMAQUHAPPLE.

AIR—"*Sodger Laddie.*"

I.

D'ye ken the big village of Balmaquhapple,
The great muckle village of Balmaquhapple?
'Tis steep'd in iniquity up to the thrapple,
And what's to become of poor Balmaquhapple?
Fling a' off your bonnets, and kneel for your life, folks,
And pray to Saint Andrew, the god o' the Fife folks;
Gar a' the hills yout wi' sheer vociferation,
And thus you may cry on sic needfu' occasion:

II.

" O blessed Saint Andrew, if e'er ye could pity folk,
Men folk or women folk, country or city folk,
Come for this ance wi' the auld thief to grapple,
And save the poor village of Balmaquhapple !
Frae drinking, and leeing, and flyting, and swearing,
And sins that ye wad be affronted at hearing,
And cheating, and stealing, O grant them redemption,
All save and except the few after to mention.

III.

There's Johnny the elder, wha hopes ne'er to need ye.
Sae pawkie, sae holy, sae gruff, and sae greedy,
Wha prays every hour, as the wayfarer passes,
But aye at a hole where he watches the lasses :
He's cheated a thousand, and e'en to this day yet
Can cheat a young lass, or they're leears that say it ;
Then gie him his way, he's sae sly and sa civil,
Perhaps in the end he may cheat Mr Devil.

IV.

There's Cappie the cobbler, and Tammie the tinman,
And Dickie the brewer, and Peter the skinman ;
And Geordie, our deacon, for want of a better ;
And Bess, that delights in the sins that beset her.
O, worthy Saint Andrew, we canna compel ye,
But ye ken as weel as a body can tell ye,
If these gang to heaven, we'll a' be sae shockit,
Your garret o' blue will but thinly be stockit.

V.

But for a' the rest, for the women's sake, save them !
Their bodies at least, and their souls, if they have them ;
But it puzzles Jock Linton, and small it avails,
If they dwell in their stomachs, their heads, or their tails ;
And save, without frown or confession auricular,
The clerk's bonny daughters, and Bell in particular ;
For ye ken that their beauty's the pride and the stapple
Of the great wicked village of Balmaquhapple."

North (*to Tickler*, *aside*). Bad—Hogg's.

Shepherd. What's that you two are speaking about? Speak up.

North. These fine lines must be preserved, James. Pray, are they allegorical?

Shepherd. What a dracht in that lum![1] It's a verra fiery furnace!—hear till't hoo it roars, like wund in a cavern! Sonnets, charauds, elegies, pastorals, lyrics, farces, tragedies, and yepics—in they a' gang into the general bleeze; then there is naething but sparking ashes, and noo the thin black wavering coom o' annihilation and oblivion! It's a sad sicht, and but for the bairnliness o't, I could weel greet. Puir chiels and lasses, they had ither howps when they sat down to compose, and invoked Apollo and the Muses!

North. James, the poor creatures have been all happy in their inspiration. Why weep? Probably, too, they kept copies, and other Balaam-boxes may be groaning with duplicates. 'Tis a strange world we live in!

Shepherd. Was you ever at the burning o' heather or whins, Mr North.

North. I have, and have enjoyed the illuminated heavens.

Tickler. Describe.

North. In half-an-hour from the first spark, the hill glowed with fire unextinguishable by waterspout. The crackle became a growl, as acre after acre joined the flames. Here and there a rock stood in the way, and the burning waves broke against it, till the crowning birch-tree took fire, and its tresses, like a shower of flaming diamonds, were in a minute consumed. Whirr, whirr, played the frequent gorcock, gobbling in his fear; and, swift as shadows, the old hawks flew screaming from their young, all smothered in a nest of ashes.

Tickler. Good—excellent!—Go it again.

North. The great pine-forest on the mountain side, two miles off, frowned in ghastly light, as in a stormy sunset—and you could see the herd of red deer, a whirlwind of antlers, descending, in their terror, into the black glen, whose entrance gleamed once—twice—thrice, as if there had been lightning; and then, as the wind changed the direction of the flames, all the distance sunk in dark repose.

Tickler. Vivid colouring, indeed, sir. Paint away.

North. That was an eagle that shot between and the moon.

Tickler. What an image!

North. Millions of millions of sparks of fire in heaven, but only some six or seven stars. How calm the large lustre of Hesperus!

[1] *Lum*—chimney.

Tickler. James, what do you think of that, eh?

Shepherd. Didna ye pity the taids and paddocks, and asks and beetles, and slaters and snails and spiders, and worms and ants, and catterpillars and bumbees, and a' the rest o' the insect-world, perishin in the flamin nicht o' their last judgment?

North. In another season, James, what life, beauty, and bliss over the verdant wilderness! There you see and hear the bees busy on the white clover—while the lark comes wavering down from heaven, to sit beside his mate on her nest! Here and there are still seen the traces of fire, but they are nearly hidden by flowers—and——

Shepherd. For a town-chiel, Mr North, you describe the kintra wi' surprisin truth and spirit; but there's aye something rather wantin about your happiest pictures, as if you had glowered on everything in a dream or trance.

North. Like your own Kilmeny, James, I am fain to steal away from this everyday world into the Land of glamoury.

Shepherd. Hoo mony volumms o' poetry, think ye, the Incremawtor has thrust, just noo, intil the fire?

North. I should think about some score, or so, of crown octavo—350 pages—twenty lines to the page. Calculate that, James.

Shepherd. Here's my keelivine.

	350	
	20	
	7000	pages—which
multiply by	20	
	140,000	lines.

Maist equal to a "farther portion" o' the "Excursion!" Surely, surely, there maun hae been twa-three[1] thousan' gude lines amang sic a multitude!

Tickler. Devil the one—all fudge and flummery. More meaning in any one paragraph of Pope than in the whole skuttleful.

Shepherd. A skuttlefu' o' poetry! I canna thole either the sicht or the soun'. It's degrawdin to the divine art. Get out o' my reach, ye wee wicked weezen'd devil, or I'll clour your pow[2] for you. And as for thae Incremawtors——

[1] *Twa-three*—two or three.

[2] *Pow*—poll, or head.

North. Why, James, would you believe it, that Stoic with the black whiskers is himself a poet; and has even now, with his inexorable poker, in all probability, thrust into nothingness a quire of his own versified MSS. !

Shepherd. Oh ! wae's me ! that poetry should be siccan a drog ! Is there nae chance, think ye, sir, o' its lookin up ?

North. None, James. Not till new men effulge. All your old stagers are done up. Scott has done his best in verse—so has Southey—so Moore—so Wordsworth—so Crabbe—so Campbell—so Hogg.

Tickler. And really, Mr North, after all, what have they done ? Sir Walter has versified a few old stories, and is at the head of all modern ballad-mongers. What more? Southey has written one wild and wondrous tale, *Thalaba ;* but all his other attempts are abortive—and the last spark of inspiration within him has been for years extinct. Many of Moore's songs will live—but a man cannot be song-singing all his days; and as for Wordsworth, take him out of the Lake country, and his prattle is tedious. Crabbe, and Campbell, and Hogg——

North. Come, come, don't be silly, Tickler. A man looks like a ninny the moment he begins even to think about versemen.

Tickler. There it goes up the chimney—An Ode to the Moon—pursued by The Sleeping Infant—The Horned Owl—The late Elephant—and General Bolivar.

Shepherd. O, sirs ! the room's gettin desperate warm. I pity the poor Incremawtors—they maun be unco dry. Beelzebub, open the window, man, ye ugly deevil, and let in a current o' cool air. Mr North, I canna thole the heat; and I ask it as a particular favour, no to burn the prose till after supper. At a' events, let the married Incremawtor gang hame to his bride—and there's five shillings to him to drink my health at his ain ingle.

(*Incremator, Devil, Clerk of the Balaam-box, Porters, and Mr Ambrose retire.*)

North. Who are the wittiest men of our day, Tickler ?

Tickler. Christopher North, Timothy Tickler, and James Hogg.

North. Poo, poo—we all know that—but out of doors ?

Tickler. Canning, Sydney Smith, and Jeffrey.

North. I fear it is so. Canning's wit is infallible. It is never out of time or place, and is finely proportioned to its object. Has he a good-natured, gentlemanly, well-educated blockhead—say of the landed interest—to make ridiculous, he does it so pleasantly, that the Esquire joins in the general smile. Is it a coarse calculating dunce of the mercantile school, he suddenly hits him such a heavy blow on the organ of number, that the stunned economist is unable to sum up the total of the whole. Would some pert prig of the profession be facetious overmuch, Canning ventures to the very borders of vulgarity, and discomfits him with an old Joe. Doth some mouthing member of mediocrity sport orator, and make use of a dead tongue, then the classical Secretary[1] runs him through and through with apt quotations, and before the member feels himself wounded, the whole House sees that he is a dead man.

Tickler. His wit is shown in greatest power in the battles of the giants. When Brougham bellows against him, a Bull of Bashan, the Secretary waits till his horns are lowered for the death-blow, and then stepping aside, he plants with graceful dexterity the fine-tempered weapon in the spine of the mighty Brute.

Shepherd. Whish!—Nae personality the nicht. Michty Brute—Do you ca' Hairy Brumm a michty Brute? He's just a maist agreeable enterteenin fallow, and I recollect sitten up wi' him a' nicht, for three nichts rinnin, about thretty years syne, at Miss Ritchie's hottle, Peebles. O man, but he was wutty wutty—and bricht thochts o' a maist extraordinary kind met thegither, frae the opposite poles o' the human understanding. I prophesied at every new half-mutchkin, that Mr Brumm would be a distinguished character; and there he is, you see, Leader o' the Opposition!

Tickler. His Majesty's Opposition!

North. Sydney Smith is a wit.

Shepherd. No him — perpetually playin upon words. I canna thole to hear words played upon till they lose their natural downright meaning and signification. It was only last week that a fallow frae Edinburgh came out to the south for orders o' speerits amang the glens (rum, and brandy, and Hollands), and I asked him to dine at Mount Benger. He

[1] At this time Canning was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

had hardly put his hat on a peg in the transe,[1] afore he began playin wi' his ain words; and he had nae sooner sat down, than he began playin wi' mine too, makin puns o' them, and double-entendres, and bits o' intolerable wutticisms, aneuch to make a body scunner. Faith, I cut him short, by tellin him that nae speerit-dealer in the kingdom should play the fule in my house, and that if he was a wut, he had better saddle his powney and be aff to Selkirk. He grew red red in the face; but for the rest o' the evening, and we didna gang to bed till the sma' hours, he was not only rational, but clever and weel-informed, and I gied him an order for twenty gallons.

Tickler. Yes — Sydney Smith has a rare genius for the grotesque. He is, with his quips and cranks, a formidable enemy to pomposity and pretension. No man can wear a big wig comfortably in his presence; the absurdity of such enormous frizzle is felt; and the dignitary would fain exchange all that horse-hair for a few scattered locks of another animal.

North. He would make a lively interlocutor at a Noctes. Indeed, I intend to ask him, and Mr Jeffrey, and Cobbett, and Joseph Hume, and a few more choice spirits, to join our festive board——

Shepherd. O man, that will be capital sport. Sic conversation!

Tickler. O my dear James, conversation is at a very low ebb in this world!

Shepherd. I've often thought and felt that, at parties where ane micht hae expeckit better things. First o' a' comes the wather—no a bad toppic, but ane that town's folks kens naething about. Wather! My faith, had ye been but in Yarrow last Thursday.

Tickler. What was the matter, James, the last Thursday in Yarrow?

Shepherd. I'se tell you, and judge for yoursel. At four in the mornin, it was that hard frost that the dubs[2] were bearin, and the midden[3] was as hard as a rickle o' stanes. We couldna plant the potawtoes. But the lift was clear. Between eight and nine, a snaw-storm came down frae the mountains about Loch Skene, noo a whirl, and noo a blash, till the grun' was whitey-blue, wi' a sliddery sort o' sleet, and the Yarrow began to roar wi' the melted broo, alang its frost-bound

[1] *Transe*—a passage within a house.
[2] *Dubs*—puddles.
[3] *Midden*—dunghill.

borders, and aneath its banks, a' hanging wi' icicles, nane o' them thinner than my twa arms. Weel then, about eleven it began to rain, for the wund had shifted—and afore dinner-time, it was an even-doun pour. It fell lown about sax—and the air grew close and sultry to a degree that was fearsome. Wha wud hae expeckit a thunder-storm on the eve o' sic a day? But the heavens, in the thundery airt, were like a dungeon—and I saw the lightning playing like meteors athwart the blackness, lang before ony growl was in the gloom. Then, a' at ance, like a wauken'd lion, the thunder rose up in his den, and shakin his mane o' brindled clouds, broke out into sic a roar that the very sun shuddered in eclipse—and the grews and collies that happened to be sittin beside me on a bit knowe, gaed whinin into the house wi' their tails atween their legs, just venturin a hafflin glance to the howling heavens noo a' in low, for the fire was strong and fierce in electrical matter, and at intervals the illuminated mountains seemed to vomit out conflagration like verra volcanoes.

Tickler. Επεα πτεροεντα!

Shepherd. Afore sunset, heaven and earth, like lovers after a quarrel, lay embraced in each other's smile!

North. Beautiful! Beautiful! Beautiful!

Tickler. Oh! James—James—James!

Shepherd. The lambs began their races on the lea, and the thrush o' Eltrive (there is but a single pair in the vale aboon the kirk) awoke his hymn in the hill-silence. It was mair like a mornin than an evenin twilight, and a' the day's hurly-burly had passed awa into the uncertainty o' a last week's dream!

North. Proof positive that, from the lips of a man of genius, even the weather——

Shepherd. I could speak for hours, days, months, and years, about the wather, without e'er becoming tiresome. O man, a cawm!

North. On shore, or at sea?

Shepherd. Either. I'm wrapped up in my plaid, and lyin a' my length on a bit green platform, fit for the fairies' feet, wi' a craig hangin ower me a thousand feet high, yet bright and balmy a' the way up wi' flowers and briars, and broom and birks, and mosses maist beautifu' to behold wi' half-shut ee, and through aneath ane's arm guardin the face frae the cloudless sunshine!

North. A rivulet leaping from the rock——

Shepherd. No, Mr North, no loupin; for it seems as if it were nature's ain Sabbath, and the verra waters were at rest. Look down upon the vale profound, and the stream is without motion! No doubt, if you were walking along the bank, it would be murmuring with your feet. But here—here up among the hills, we can imagine it asleep, even like the well within reach of my staff!

North. Tickler, pray make less noise, if you can, in drinking, and also in putting down your tumbler. You break in upon the repose of James's picture.

Shepherd. Perhaps a bit bonny butterfly is resting, wi' faulded wings, on a gowan, no a yard frae your cheek; and noo, waukening out o' a simmer dream, floats awa in its wavering beauty, but as if unwilling to leave its place of mid-day sleep, comin back and back, and roun' and roun', on this side and that side, and ettlin[1] in its capricious happiness to fasten again on some brighter floweret, till the same breath o' wund that lifts up your hair sae refreshingly catches the airy voyager, and wafts her away into some other nook of her ephemeral paradise.

Tickler. I did not know that butterflies inhabited the region of snow.

Shepherd. Ay, and mony million moths; some o' as lovely green as of the leaf of the moss-rose, and ithers bright as the blush with which she salutes the dewy dawn; some yellow as the long steady streaks that lie below the sun at set, and ithers blue as the sky before his orb has westered. Spotted, too, are all the glorious creatures' wings—say rather, starred wi' constellations! Yet, O sirs, they are but creatures o' a day!

North. Go on with the calm, James—the calm!

Shepherd. Gin a pile o' grass straughtens itself in silence, you hear it distinctly. I'm thinkin that was the noise o' a beetle gaun to pay a visit to a freen on the ither side o' that mossy stane. The melting dew quakes! Ay, sing awa, my bonny bee, maist industrious o' God's creatures! Dear me, the heat is ower muckle for him; and he burrows himsel in amang a tuft o' grass, like a beetle panting! and noo invisible a' but the yellow doup o' him. I too feel drowsy, and will go to sleep amang the mountain solitude.

North. Not with such a show of clouds——

[1] *Ettlin*—intending, attempting.

Shepherd. No! not with such a show of clouds. A congregation of a million might worship in that Cathedral! What a dome! And is not that flight of steps magnificent? My imagination sees a crowd of white-robed spirits ascending to the inner shrine of the temple. Hark—a bell tolls! Yonder it is, swinging to and fro, half-minute time, in its tower of clouds. The great air-organ 'gins to blow its pealing anthem—and the overcharged spirit falling from its vision, sees nothing but the pageantry of earth's common vapours—that ere long will melt in showers, or be wafted away in darker masses over the distance of the sea. Of what better stuff, O Mr North, are made all our waking dreams? Call not thy Shepherd's strain fantastic; but look abroad over the work-day world, and tell him where thou seest aught more steadfast or substantial than that cloud-cathedral, with its flight of vapour-steps, and its mist towers, and its air-organ, now all gone for ever, like the idle words that imaged the transitory and delusive glories.

Tickler. Bravo, Shepherd, bravo! You have nobly vindicated the weather as a topic of conversation. What think you of the Theatre—Preaching—Politics—Magazines and Reviews, and the threatened Millennium?

Shepherd. Na, let me tak my breath. What think ye, Mr Tickler, yoursel, o' preachin?

Tickler. No man goes to church more regularly than I do; but the people of Scotland are cruelly used by their ministers. No sermon should exceed half-an-hour at the utmost. That is a full allowance.

North. The congregation, if assured that the sermon would stop within that period of time, would all prick up their ears, and keep their eyes open during the whole performance. But when there is no security against an hour, or even an hour and a half, the audience soon cease to deserve that name, and the whole discourse is lost.

Tickler. Then, most ministers do drawl, or drivel, or cant after a very inexcusable fashion. A moderate degree of animation would carry almost any preacher through half-an-hour agreeably to an audience—yet is it not true, that, generally speaking, eyelids begin to fall under ten minutes, or from that to a quarter of an hour? Why is it thus?

Shepherd. What yawns have I not seen in kirks! The women, at least the young anes, dinna like to open their

mouths verra wide, for it's no becoming, and they're feared the lads may be glowering at them; so they just pucker up their bit lips, draw in their breath, haud doun their heads, and put up their hauns to their chafts,[1] to conceal a suppressed gaunt,[2] and then straughtenin themsels up, pretend to be hearkenin to the practical conclusions.

Tickler. And pray, James, what business have you to be making such observations during divine service?

Shepherd. I'm speakin o' ither years, Mr Tickler, and human nature's the same noo as in the Ninety-eight. As for the auld wives, they lay their big-bonneted heads on their shouther, and fa' ower into a deep sleep at ance; yet you'll never hear a single ane among them committin a snore. I've often wondered at that, for maist o' the cummers hae sonorous noses when lyin beside the gudeman, and may be heard through a' the house, as regular as clock-wark.

Tickler. Yes, James, the power of the mind over itself in sleep is indeed inexplicable. The worthy fat old matron says to herself, as her eyes are closing, " I must not snore in the kirk;" and she snores not—at the most, a sort of snuffle. How is this?

Shepherd. Noo and then you'll see an ill-faured, pock-marked, black-a-viced hizzie in the front laft, opposite the poupit, wha has naething to houp frae our side o' the house, openin the great muckle ugly mouth o' her, like that o' a bull-trout in Tarras Moss, as if she were ettlin to swallow the minister.

North. James—James—spare the softer sex!

Shepherd. But the curiousest thing to observe about the lasses, when they are gettin drowsy during sermon, is their een. First a glazedness comes ower them, and the lids fa' doun, and are lifted up at the rate o' about ten in the minute. Then the poor creatures gie their heads a shake, and, unwillin to be overcome, try to find out the verse the minister may be quotin; but a' in vain, for the hummin stillness o' the kirk subdues them into sleep, and the sound o' the preacher is in their lugs like that o' a waterfa'.

North. Your words, James, are like poppy and mandragora.

Shepherd. Then, a'thegither inconscious o' what they're doin, they fix their glimmerin een upon your face, as if they

[1] *Chafts*—jaws. [2] *Gaunt*—yawn.

were dyin for love o' you, and keep nid-noddin upon you, for great part o' ane o' the dizzen divisions o' the discourse. You may gie a bit lauch at them wi' the corner o' your ee, or touch their fit wi' yours aneath the table, and they'll never sae much as ken you're in the same seat; and, finally, the soft rounded chin draps down towards the bonny bosom; the blue-veined violet eyelids close the twilight whose dewy fall it was sae pleasant to behold; the rose-bud lips, slightly apart, reveal teeth pure as lily leaves, and the bonny innocent is as sound asleep as her sister at hame in its rockin craddle.

North. My dear James, there is so much feeling in your description, that, bordering though it be on the facetious, it yet leaves a pleasant impression on my mind of the Sabbath-service in one of our lowly kirks.

Shepherd. Far be it frae me or mine, Mr North, to treat wi' levity ony sacred subject. But gin folk wull sleep in the kirk, where's the harm in saying that they do so? My ain opinion is, that the mair dourly you set yoursel to listen to a no verra bricht discoorse, as if you had taken an oath to devour't frae stoop to roop, the mair certain sure you are o' fa'in ower into a deep lang sleep. The verra attitude o' leanin back, and stretching out your legs, and fixing your een in ae direction, is a maist dangerous attitude; and then, gin the minister has ony action,—say, jookin down his head, or see-sawin wi' his hauns, or leanin ower, as if he wanted to speak wi' the precentor, or keepin his een fixed on the roof, as if there were a hole in't lettin in the licht o' heaven, —or turnin first to the ae side and then to the ither, that the congregation may hae an equal share o' his front physiognomy as weel's his side face,—or staunin bolt upright in the verra middle o' the poupit, without ever ance movin ony mair than gin he were a corp set up on end by some cantrip,[1] and lettin out the dry, dusty moral apothegms wi' ae continued and monotonous girn,—oh! Mr North, Mr North, could even an evil conscience keep awake under such soporifics, ony mair than the honestest o' men, were the banns cried for the third time, and he gaun to be married on the Monday morning?

North. Yet, after all, James, I believe country congregations are, in general, very attentive.

Shepherd. Ay, ay, sir. If twa are sleepin, ten are wauken;

[1] *Cantrip*—magical spell.

and I seriously think that mair than ae half o' them that's sleepin enter into the spirit o' the sermon. You see they a' hear the text, and the introductory remarks, and the heads; and, fa'in asleep in a serious and solemn mood, they carry the sense alang wi' them; neither can they be said no to hear an accompanying soun', so that it wadna be just fair to assert that they lose the sermon they dinna listen to; for thochts, and ideas, and feelings, keep floatin doun alang the stream o' silent thocht, and when they awaken at the "Amen," their minds, if no greatly instructed, hae been tranquilleezed; they join loudly in the ensuing psalm, and without remembering mony o' the words, carry hame the feck[1] o' the meaning o' the discourse, and a' the peculiarities o' the doctrine.

North. I never heard a bad sermon in a country church in my life.

Shepherd. Nor me neither. Oh, man, it's great nonsense a' that talk about preachin that gangs on in Embro'. Simplicity, sincerity, and earnestness, are a' I ask frae ony preacher. Our duty is plain, and it requires neither great genius nor great erudition to teach and enforce it. To me nae mair disgusting sight than a cretur thinkin o' himsel, and the great appearance he is makin afore his brother-worms!

Tickler. The popular preacher has written his sermon according to the rules of rhetoric, and for the sake of effect. He chuckles inwardly before he delivers the blow that tells; and at the close of every climax the inward man exclaims, "What a fine boy am I!"

North. He dares some antagonist to the fight who has been dead for a hundred years—digs up such of his bones as are yet unmouldered, and erects them into a skeleton-figure veiled with its cerements. There stands the champion of infidelity; and there the defender of the Faith! Twenty to one — Flesh against Bones — and at the first facer, Hume or Voltaire is grassed, and gives in.

Tickler. The pride of the presbytery is in high condition, and kicks his prostrate foe till the shroud rings again like a bag of bones.

Shepherd. Then, when the kirk scales,[2] what a speerin[3] o' questions about the discourse! "Oh! wasna the doctor great the day?" "Oh! Mem, wasna he beautifu' about

[1] *The feck*—the chief part.

[2] *The kirk scales*—the congregation disperses.

[3] *Speerin*—asking.

the myrrh?" "Will you go, Miss Katie, and hear him speak in the General Assembly?" "He seemed very much fatigued, and perspired most profusely—he is quite equal to Chalmers." And so the vulgar slang spreads along the streets, and renders denner itsel loathsome. Is this, I ask, the spirit of religious worship on God's holy day?

North. No, James—a thousand times worse than the sleeping you so beautifully described.

Shepherd. Hard-working auld men, wi' white heads, that hae walked four or sax miles to the kirk, may weel close their een, for a short space, during ony discourse ever delivered by one of woman born — so may their wives, whose hauns have never had an idle hour during the stirring week—so may their sons, who have been sowing, or reaping the harvest—and so may their daughters—God bless them! who have been singing at their domestic toils, frae the earliest glint o' morn to the lustre o' the evening star. But thinkna that I meant to speak the exact truth when I was jokin about their sleepin in the kirk. I kent whom I was talkin to, and that they wouldna mistake the spirit o' my pictur. A country congregation carries into the House of God heart-offerings o' piety, gratefu' to Him and his angels. They go there to sing his praises, and to join in prayer to his throne, and to hear expounded his Holy Word. They go not thither as to a theatre, to see an actor——

North. Nor to compare Mr This with Dr That——

Tickler. Nor to cock the critic eye at the preacher, and palaver about the sermon, as about an article in the *Edinburgh Review*——

North. Nor to assume a Sabbath-sanctity, from which their week-day avocations are all abhorrent.

Shepherd. Nor to turn up the whites of their eyes to Heaven, that have their natural expression only when devouring the dust o' the earth.

Tickler. Nor to dismiss all charity from their hearts towards "the sitters below" another preacher, and to look upon them returning from their own church as so many lost sheep.

North. Nor to drive away home, in unpaid chariots, the most pious of women, but the sulkiest of wives.

Tickler. Nor unforgetful of the cards of yester-night, nor unhopeful of the rubber of to-morrow.

Shepherd. To eat a cold denner, wi' a sour temper, and a

face that, under the gloom o' an artificial religion that owns no relation wi' the heart, looks as ugly at fourty as that o' a kintra-wife's at threescore.

North. What the deuce is the meaning of all this vituperation?

Shepherd. Deil tak me gin I ken. But I fin' mysel gettin desperate angry at something or ither, and could abuse maist onybody. Wha was't that introduced the toppic o' kirks? I'm sure it wasna me. It was you, Mr Tickler.

Tickler. Me introduce the top of kirks?

Shepherd. Yes; you said "What think you of the theatre — preaching — politics — magazines and reviews, and the threatened millennium?" I'll swear to the verra words, as if I had taen them down wi' the keelivine.

North. James, don't you think Tickler would have been an admirable preacher?

Shepherd. I canna say; but I could answer for he's being a good precentor.[1]

Tickler. Why not a preacher?

Shepherd. You wadna hae been to be depended on. Your discourses, like your ain figure, wad hae wanted proportion; and as for doctrine, I doubt you wad hae been heterodox. Then, you wad hae been sic a queer-lookin chiel in the poupit!

Tickler. Don't you think I would have been an admirable Moderator?[2]

Shepherd. You're just best as you are—a gentleman at large. You're scarcely weel adapted for ony profession—except maybe a fizician. You wad hae fan'[3] a pulse wi' a true Esculawpian solemnity; and that face o' yours, when you look'd glum or gruesome, wad hae frichtened families into fees, and held patients down to sick-beds, season after season. O man! but you wad hae had gran' practice.

Tickler. I could not have endured the quackery of the thing, Hogg.

Shepherd. Haud your tongue. There's equal quackery in a' things alike. Look at a sodger—that is, an offisher—a' wavin wi' white plumes, glitterin wi' gowd, and ringin wi' iron—gallopin on a grey horse, that caves[4] the foam frae its

[1] The "precentor" in the Presbyterian service corresponds to the "clerk" in the Episcopalian.

[2] Moderator, or president of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

[3] *Fan'*—felt. [4] *Caves*—tosses.

fiery nostrils, wi' a mane o' clouds, and a tail that flows like a cataract; mustachies about the mouth like a devourin cannibal, and proud fierce een, that seem glowerin for an enemy into the distant horrison—his long swurd swinging in the scabbard wi' a fearsome clatter aneath Bellerophon's belly —and his doup dunshin[1] down among the spats o' a teeger's skin, or that o' a leopard—till the sound o' the trumpet gangs up to the sky, answered by the rampaugin Arab's "ha, ha" —and a' the stopped street stares on the aid-de-camp o' the stawf,—writers' clerks, bakers, butchers, and printers' deevils, a' wushin they were sodgers,—and leddies frae balconies, where they sit shooin silk purses in the sunshine, start up, and, wi' palpitatin hearts, send looks o' love and languishment after the Flyin Dragon.

North. Mercy on us, James, you are a perfect Tyrtæus.

Shepherd. O! wad you believ't—but it's true—that at school that symbol o' extermination was ca'd Fozie[2] Tam?

North. Spare us, James—spare us. The pain in our side returns.

Shepherd. Every callant in the class could gie him his licks; and I recollec ance a lassie geein him a bloody nose. He durstna gang into the dookin[3] aboon his doup, for fear o' drownin, and even then wi' seggs;[4] and as for speelin trees, he never ventured aboon the rotten branches o' a Scotch fir. He was feared for ghosts, and wadna sleep in a room by himsel; and ance on a Halloween, he swarfed at the apparition o' a lowin turnip.[5] But noo he's a warrior, and fought at Waterloo. Yes—Fozie Tam wears a medal, for he overthrew Napoleon. Ca' ye na that quackery, wi' a vengeance?

North. Why, James, you do not mean surely thus to characterise the British soldier?

Shepherd. No. The British army, drawn up in order o' battle, seems to me an earthly image of the power of the right hand of God. But still what I said was true, and nae ither name had he at school but Fozie Tam. Oh, sirs! when I see what creturs like him can do, I could greet that I'm no a sodger.

Tickler. What the deuce can they do, that you or I, James, cannot do as well, or better?

[1] *Dunshin.* There seems to be no English word for this except "bumping;" yet how feeble!

[2] *Fozie*—soft as a frost-bitten turnip.

[3] *Dookin*—bathing.

[4] *Seggs*—sedges, answering the purpose of a cork-jacket.

[5] A turnip lanthorn.

Shepherd. I wonder to hear you askin. Let you or me gang into a public room at ae door, amang a hunder bonny lassies, and Fozie Tam in full uniform at anither, and every star in the firmament will shine on him alone—no a glint for ane o' us twa—no a smile or a syllable—we can only see the back o' their necks.

Tickler. And bare enough they probably are, James.

Shepherd. Nae great harm in that, Mr Tickler, for a bonny bare neck can do naebody ill, and to me has aye rather the look o' innocence—but maun a poet or orator——

Tickler. Be neglected on account of Fozie Tam?

Shepherd. And by mony o' the verra same creturs that at a great leeterary sooper the nicht afore were sae affable and sae flatterin, askin me to receet my ain verses, and sing my ain sangs,—drinkin the health o' the Author o' the *Queen's Wake* in toddy out o' his ain tumbler—shakin hauns at partin, and in the confusion at the foot o' the stairs, puttin their faces sae near mine, that their sweet warm breath was maist like a faint, doubtfu' kiss, dirlin[1] to ane's verra heart—and after a' this, and mair than this, only think o' being clean forgotten, overlooked, or despised, for the sake o' Fozie Tam!

Tickler. We may have our revenge. Wait till you find him in plain clothes—on half-pay, James, or sold out—and then, like Romeo, when the play is over, and the satin breeches off, he walks behind the scenes, no better than a tavern-waiter, or a man-milliner's apprentice.

Shepherd. There's some comfort in that, undoubtedly. Still, I wish I had been a "soldier in my youth." I wadna care sae muckle about shoemakers; but let even a tailor enlist, and nae sooner has he got a feather on his head, than he can whussle out the proudest lass in the village.

North. Somewhat too much of this. None of us, perhaps, have had any great reason to complain—and really, at our time of life——

Tickler. Agreed.—You were at the Professional Concert, James, t'other night, I think?

Shepherd. Faith no. Catch me at a Professional Concert again, and I'll gie a sooper to the haill orchestra.

Tickler. These fiddlers carry things with a very high hand indeed; and the amateurs, as they call themselves, are even

[1] *Dirlin*—thrilling.

more insufferable. There they go off at score, every wrist wrigglin in some wretched concerto, and the face of every scraper on catgut as intent on the miscreated noise, as if not only his own and his family's subsistence depended on it, but also their eternal salvation!

Shepherd. And they ca' that music! It may be sae to them, for there's nae sayin what a man's lugs may be brought to by evil education; but look at the puir audience, and the hardest heart maun pity them, for they're in great pain, and wad fain be out. But that maunna be—they maun sit still there on the verra same bit o' the hard bench—without speakin or even whisperin—for twa—three—four hours—the room het and close—not a drap o' onything to drink—nae air but the flirt o' a fan—the cursed concertos gettin louder and louder—the fiddlers' faces mair intolerably impudent the stronger they strum——

North. Concerts are curses, certainly. The noise made at them by persons on fiddles, and other instruments, ought to be put down by the public. Let Yaniewicz, and Finlay Dun, and Murray, play solos of various kinds—divine airs of the great old masters, illustrious or obscure—airs that may lap the soul in Elysium. Let them also, at times, join their eloquent violins, and harmoniously discourse in a celestial colloquy: they are men of taste, feeling, and genius. Let the fine-eared spirits of Italy, and Germany, and Scotland, enthral our——

Shepherd. Haud your tongue, Mr North, you're gettin ower flowery. What I say's this—that, wi' the exception o' some dizzen, ae half o' whom are mere priggish pretenders, every ither leevin soul at a concert sits in a state o' sulky stupefaction. And to pay five shillings, or seven, or aiblins half a guinea, for tickets to be admitted, for a long winter's nicht, into purgatory—or without offence, say at ance, into hell!

Tickler. The fiddling junto should be kicked to the devil. Let the public absent herself from such concerts, and then we may have music—but not till then. The performers must be starved out of their insolent self-sufficiency. Nothing else will do.

North. We deserve it. We must needs be Athenians in all things; and, in fear of being reckoned unscientific, hundreds of people, not generally esteemed idiots, will crowd to a concert, at which they know that, before they have sat half-an-

hour, they will most devoutly desire that fiddles had never been found out, and the arm of every fiddler palsied beyond the power of future torments.

Shepherd. Why dinna[1] ye gie them a dressin in the Magazine?

North. Perhaps, James, they are beneath print——

Shepherd. Na, na; gie them a skelp or twa—for they're as sensitive as skinned paddocks.[2]

North. I must have some talk with my friend Sandy Ballantyne[3]—with whom, by the by, I have not smoked a cigar for some moons bygone—for he knows I love music, and that I could sit from sunset to sunrise beneath the power of his matchless violin. But says I, my dear Sandy—My dear Sandy, says I——

Shepherd. You may just as weel at ance haud your tongue, as to speak to him, or the like o' him, on the subject. He's far ower gran' a sceeantific player to mind ae word that you say; and him, and George Thamson, and George Hogarth, and the lave o' the yamatoors, will just lauch at ye as an ignoramus, that kens naething o' acowstics, or the dooble-dooble baiss, or Batehoven, or Mowsart, or that Carle Weber.

Tickler. I have better hopes, James. The feeling, taste, knowledge of the majority must be consulted. Science must not be sacrificed, for without science what would be a concert? But whenever five hundred human beings are collected in one room, not for punishment but enjoyment, they are entitled, on the score of their humanity, to some small portion of pleasure; and none but directors, with black hearts, will consign them all up to unmitigated torments. I am confident, therefore, that Mr Alexander Ballantyne——

Shepherd. He'll cry "whish," if you sae much as whisper, and wull rouse[4] to the skies thae cursed concert-chiels in the orchestra coming out wi' a crash that crushes in the drums o' your lugs, pierces the verra ceiling, and dumfounders the understanding by a confused noise o' naethingness, frae which a' sense is banished; and that has nae mair claim to be ca'd music than the routin o' ten thousand kye at Fakirk Tryst.

North. It is many years, James, since I have been so much

[1] *Dinna*—do not. [2] *Paddocks*—frogs.

[3] Alexander Ballantyne, the brother of Sir Walter Scott's familiars, James and John Ballantyne. [4] *Rouse*—extol.

pleased with any one's singing as with Miss Noel's.[1] She is a sweet, gentle, modest creature, and her pipe has both power and pathos.

Shepherd. She's just ane o' the verra best singers I ever heard in a' my life—and the proof o't is, that although an English lassie, she can sing sweetly a Scottish sang. That tries the heart at ance, you see, Mr North; and unless the singer be innocent and amiable, and fu' o' natural sensibility, such as a faither wad like in his ain dochter, she needna try ane o' our lyrics. Here's Miss Noel's health, and a' that's gude to her!

North. Vocal music, James, when good, how divine! Your own fair young daughter sitting with her arm on your knee, and looking up in her old father's face, while her innocent lips distil sounds that melt into his yearning heart, and her blue eyes fill with happy tears under the pensive charm of her own melody!

Shepherd. I canna conceive a purer happiness. O man, Mr North, my dear, dear sir, why dinna, why wunna ye marry? You that are sae familiar in imagination wi' the haill range o' a' pawrents' thochts, and feelings.—Oh! why, why sudna ye marry?

North. James—look on this crutch—that slit shoe—these chalk-stoned fingers—hear that short cat-cough——

Shepherd. Deil the fears. Mony a young woman wad loup at the offer. Ye hae that in your ee, sir, that takes a woman's heart. And then, Fame, Fame, Fame, that's the idol they worship upon their knees—witness the Duke o' Wellington and mony ithers.

North. It would kill me quite to be refused.

Shepherd. Refused! There's no a woman, either maid or widow, in a' Scotland, that's reached the years o' understandin, that wad refuse you. The world wad think her mad. I ken mair than a dizzen, no out o' their teens yet, that's dyin for you.—Isna that true, Mr Tickler?

Tickler. True!—Ay, true as Waterton on the Cayman.[2] But North is vain enough already of his empiry over the fair sex—too much so, indeed, I fear, ever to confine himself

[1] One of the Edinburgh theatrical company, afterwards Mrs Bushe.

[2] Mr Waterton's *equestrian* exploits on the back of the crocodile, as narrated by him in his "Wanderings," are not so incredible when it is considered that the animal had a hook through its jaws, and that half-a-dozen Indians were hauling at the rope attached to it.

within the narrow limits of the conjugal state. He's like the air, "a chartered libertine."

Shepherd. Think shame o' yoursel, Mr Tickler. That never was Mr North's character, even in lusty youth-head. Ma faith, he was ower muckle o' a man. Open bosoms werena the treasures he coveted—in his estimation no worth the riflin. He has had, beyond a' doubt, his ain dear secret, sighin, and sabbin hours, when there were nae starnies in heaven, but when twa lampin een, far mair beautifu' than them, were close upon him, wi' their large liquid lustre, till his gazing soul overflowed with unendurable bliss. When——

North. Good heavens, James, remember those secrets were confided to you at the Confessional!

Shepherd. They are safe as gin they were my ain, Mr North. How's the Ludge[1] looking this spring?

North. In great beauty. The garden-wall you abused so three years ago is now one blush of blossoms. What you called the "wee pookit shrubs," now form a balmy wilderness, populous with bees and birds—all the gravel-walks are now overshadowed with the cool dimness of perpetual twilight. Ten yards off you cannot see the house—only its rounded chimneys—and, indeed, on a chosen day of cloudless sunshine, yet unsultry air, you might imagine yourself beneath the skies of Italy, and in the neighbourhood of Rome.

Tickler. Of Modern Athens, if you please, sir.

Shepherd. Just o' Auld Reekie, gin you like. Are the Fife hens layin?

North. Yes, James—and Tapitoury is sitting.

Shepherd. That's richt. Weel, o' a' the how-towdies I ever ate, yon species is the maist truly gigantic. I could hae taen my Bible-oath that they were turkeys. Then I thocht, "surely they maun be capons;" but when I howked into the inside o' ane o' them, and brought out a spoonfu' o' yellow eggs, frae the size o' a pepper-corn to that o' a boy's bools,[2] and up to the bulk o' a ba' o' thread, thinks I to mysel, "sure aneuch they are hens," and close upon the layin. Maist a pity to kill them!

North. James, you shall have a dozen eggs to set, and future ages will wonder at the poultry of the Forest. Did you ever see a capercailzie?

Shepherd. Never. They have been extinct in Scotland for

[1] See *ante*, p. 23, note.

[2] *Bools*—marbles.

fifty years. But the truth is, Mr North, that all domesticated fowl would live brawly if turned out into the wilds and woods. They might lose in size, but they would gain in sweetness—a wild sweetness—caught frae leaves and heather-berries, and the products o' desert places, that are blooming like the rose. A tame turkey wad be a wild ane in sax months; and oh, sir! it wad be gran' sport to see and hear a great big bubbly-jock[1] gettin on the wing in a wood, wi' a loud gobble, gobble, gobble, redder than ordinar in the face, and the ugly feet o' him danglin aneath his heavy hinder-end, till the hail brought him down with a thud and a squelch amang the astonished pointers!

North. I have not taken a game certificate this year, James. Indeed——

Shepherd. You're just becomin perfectly useless a'the-gither, Mr North; and then look at the Magazine—you would seem no to hae taen out a game certificate there either—and there are poachers on the manor.

North. I never cut up anybody nowadays—for old age, James, like an intimate knowledge of the Fine Arts—"*Emollit mores nec sinit esse feros.*"

Shepherd. You're far ower good-natured, Mr North; and the corbies,[2] thinkin there's nae gun about the house, or, at least, nae pouther and lead, are beginnin to come croakin close in upon the premises wi' their ugly thrapples,[3] the foul carrion! You should lay brown Bess ower the garden-dike, and send the hail into their brains for them, and then hing the brutes up by the heels frae a stab, wi' their bloody beaks downmost, till a' the tribe keep aloof in their dark neuks frae the smell o' kindred corruption; or gin you wad only gie me the gun——

North. Poo—poo—James—the vermin murder one another; and nothing, you know, is more common than to come upon a poor emaciated dying devil in a ditch, surrounded by birds of the same nest, who keep hopping about at some little distance, narrowing and narrowing the circle, as the croak of the carrion gets more hoarse and husky, till they close in upon the famished fowl in his last blindness, making prey of a carcass that is hardly worth tearing in pieces, a fleshless bundle of fetid feathers, here and there bedabbled with thin blood, changed almost into water by that alchemist—Hunger.

[1] *Bubbly-jock*—turkey-cock. [2] *Corbies*—crows. [3] *Thrapple*—windpipe.

Tickler. Were the hares numerous in the Forest last season, James?

Shepherd. Just atween the twa. I gripped about a hunder and forty wi' the grews. I never recollect them rin stronger —perfec witches and warlocks. What for cam ye never out?

Tickler. I have given up the sports of the field, too, James —even angling itself.

Shepherd. Weel, I get fonder and fonder o' grewin every season. My heart loups when Poossie starts frae the rushes wi' her lang hornlike lugs and cockit fud, the slut, and before she sees the dowgs, keeps ganging rather leisurely up the knowe—till catching a glimpse o' Claverse, doun drap her lugs a' at ance, and laying her belly to the brae, awa she flees, Claverse turning her a thousand times, till, wi' a desperate spang, he flings himsel on her open-mouthed—a caterwaulin as o' weans greetin for sook at midnight, and then a's husht, and puir Poossie dead as a herring.

North. You seem melancholy, Tickler—a penny for your thoughts.

Tickler. I am depressed under the weight of an unwritten article. That everlasting Magazine of yours embitters my existence. O, that there were but one month in the year without a *Blackwood!*

Shepherd. Or rather a year in ane's life without it, that a body micht hae leisure to prepare for anither warld. Hoo the Numbers accumulate on the shelve o' ane's leebrary! I begin to think they breed. Then a dizzen or twa are maistly lyin on the drawers-head—twice as mony mair in the neuks o' rooms, up and down stairs—the servants get haud o' them in the kitchen—and ye canna open the press to tak a dram, but there's the face o' Geordy Buchanan.[1]

Tickler. My dear Shepherd, you are a happy man in the Forest, beyond the clutches and the clack of an Editor. But here am I worried to death by devils, from the tenth to the twentieth of every month. I wish I was dead.

Shepherd. You dinna wush ony sic thing, Mr Tickler. That appeteet o' yours is worth five thousan' a-year. O man! it would be a sair pity to dee wi' sic an appeteet! Tell me about the Haggis-Feast.

[1] See *ante*, p. 27, note 2.

Tickler. A dozen of us entered our Haggises for a sweepstakes—and the match was decided at worthy Mrs Fergusson's, High Street. My Haggis (they were all made, either by our wives or cooks, at our respective places of abode) ran second to Meg Dods's.[1] The Director-general's (which was what sporting men would have called a roarer) came in third —none of the others were placed.

Shepherd. Did ony accident happen amang the Haggises? I see by your face that ane at least amang the dizzen played the deevil. I recollec ance the awfu'est scene wi' a Haggis, in auld Mr Laidlaw's[2] house. It was a great muckle big ane, answering to Robert Burns's description, wi' its hurdies like twa distant hills, and occupied the centre o' the table, round whilk sat about a score o' lads and lasses. The auld man had shut his een to ask a blessing, when some evil speerit put it into my head to gie the bag a slit wi' my gully.[3] Like water on the breakin o' a dam, out rushed, in an instantawneous overflow, the inside o' the great chieftain o' the Pudding race, and the women-folk brak out into sic a shriek, that the master thocht somebody had drapped down dead. Meanwhile, its contents didna stop at the edge o' the table, but gaed ower wi' a sclutter upon the lads' breeks and the lasses' petticoats, burnin the wearers to the bane; for what's hetter than a haggis?

Tickler. Nothing on this side of the grave.

Shepherd. What a skirlin![4] And then a' the collies began yelpin and youffin, for some o' them had their tauted[5] hips scalded, and ithers o' them couldna see for the stew that was rinnin down their chafts. Glee'd[6] Shooshy Dagleish fell a' her length in the thickest part o' the inundation, wi' lang Tommy Potts aboon her, and we thocht they would never hae foun' their feet again, for the floor was as sliddery as ice—and——

North. Now, James, were you to write that down, and give it to the world in a book, it would be called coarse.

Shepherd. Nae doubt. Everything nat'ral, and easy, and true, is ca'd coorse—as I think I hae observed afore noo in

[1] Mrs Johnston, author of many excellent tales and novels, was the compiler of the standard cookery-book known as Meg Dods'.

[2] This Mr Laidlaw was the father of William Laidlaw, Sir Walter Scott's friend and steward.

[3] *Gully*—large pocket-knife.

[4] *Skirlin*—shrieking.

[5] *Tauted*—matted.

[6] *Glee'd*—squinting.

this verra room—and what has been the consequence o' sic puling criticism? Wishy-washy water-colours, sae faint that you canna tell a tree frae a tether, or a dowg frae a soo, or a fish frae a fule, or a man frae a woman. Why, Mr North, I'd lay my lugs, that gin our conversation here were a' taen doun in short-hand, and prented in the Magazine, there wadna be wantin puir cheepin fushionless creturs to ca't coorse.

North. Theocritus has been blamed, James, on the same score.

Shepherd. The Allan Ramsay o' Sicily, as I hae heard; and the best pastoral poet o' the ancient warld. Thank God, Mr North, the fresh airs o' heaven blow through your shepherd's hut, and purify it frae a' pollution. Things hae really come to a queer pass when towns' bodies, leevin in shops and cellars, and garrets and common stairs, and lanes and streets that, wi' a' their fine gas lamp-posts, are pestilential wi' filth and foulzie; and infested wi' lean, mangy dowgs, ruggin out stinkin banes frae the sewers; and wi' auld wives, like broken-backed witches, that are little mair than bundles o' movin rags, clautin[1] among the bakiefu's o' ashes; and wi' squads o' routin or spewin bullies o' chiels, staggerin hame frae tripe-soopers, to the disturbance o' the flaes in their yellow-tinged-lookin blankets; and wi' anes, and twas, and threes, o' what's far waur than a' these, great lang-legged, tawdry, and tawpy limmers,[2] standin at closes, wi' mouths red wi' paint, and stinkin o' gin like the bungs o' speerit-casks, when the speerit has been years in the wudd; while far and wide ower the city (I'm speakin o' the Auld Town) you hear a hellish howl o' thieves and prostitutes carousin on red herrings and distillery-whusky, deep down in dungeons aneath the verra stanes o' the street; and faint far-aff echoes o' fechts wi' watchmen, and cries o' "murder, murder—fire, fire" drowned in the fiercer hubbub o' curses, endin in shouts o' deevilish lauchter—I say—What was I gaun to say, sir? something about the peace and pleasantness o' Mount Benger, was't no? and o' the harmless life and conversation o' us shepherds amang the braes, and within the murmurs o' the sheep-washing Yarrow.

North. I hope it was so—for that dark picture needs relief.

Shepherd. And it shall hae relief. Wad it no be relief to rise, at Mount Benger, just a wee bit dim, dewy half-hour

[1] *Clautin*—groping. [2] *Tawpy limmers*—slovenly jades.

afore the sun; and when a' the household were yet asleep in the heaven o' mornin dreams, to dauner awa down to the soun' o' the waterfa', that ye skently see glimmerin in the uncertain twilight?

North. And so leap in upon the Naïad before she has braided her tresses, or arranged the cerulean folds of her flowing cymar.

Shepherd. Wad it no be relief to see green glittering Nature becoming distincter and distincter, far and wide ower the vale and braes, and hills and mountains, till, ere you can finish the unpremeditated prayer that God's beautiful creation has breathed into your heart—Earth and Heaven are in broad daylight, and, solemn thocht! anither morning is added to the span of man's mortal years?

Tickler. "O rus!"

Shepherd. A' the larks are awa up wi' their sangs to heaven—a' the linties are low down in the broom wi' theirs—sic is the variety o' instinct amang the bonny creturs that live in nests! And the trouts are loupin in the water, and the lambs are rinnin races on the braes, and gin I were there to see, perhaps the wild swan is amang the water-lilies of St Mary's Loch, or say rather the Loch o' the Lowes, for that is a lonelier water, and farther up amang the shadows o' the hills.

North. A morning landscape, by Claude Lorraine!

Shepherd. Returnin back hame, the wife and weans are a' at the door,—and isna my wee Jamie[1] a fine fallow, wi' his licht-blue cunnin een, and that bashfu' lovin lauch, when he sees his father—and that saft and low forest voice, that gars me, every time I see the blessed face o' him, thank God for his goodness, and my heart overflow wi' what is surely happiness, if there be sic a thing as happiness on this inexplicable earth?

Tickler. Here's your fireside, James—your porch—the roof-tree. North, fill a bumper. (*Three times three.*)

North. You once were so good as to flatter me by saying, that I ought to go into Parliament. Now, James, if you wish it, I will bring you in.

Shepherd. I haena the least ambition. Sae far frae envyin the glory o' the orators in that House, I wadna swap ane o' my ain bit wee sangs wi' the langest-wunded speech that has been "hear'd, hear'd," this Session.

Tickler. James, let us have Meg of Marley.

[1] Hogg's eldest son.

MEG O' MARLEY.[1]

1.

O ken ye Meg o' Marley glen,
The bonny blue-ee'd deary ?
She's play'd the deil amang the men,
An' a' the land's grown eiry ;
She's stown the Bangor[2] frae the clerk,
An' snool'd[3] him wi' the shame o't ;
The minister's fa'en through the text,
An' Meg gets a' the blame o't.

2.

The plowman plows without the sock,
The goadman whistles sparely,
The shepherd pines amang his flock,
An' turns his ee to Marley ;
The tailor's fa'en outower the bed,
The cobbler ca's a parley,
The weaver's fa'en out through the web ;
An' a' for Meg o' Marley.

3.

What's to be done ? for our goodman
Is flyting late and early ;
He rises but to curse an' ban,
An' sits down but to ferly.[4]
But ne'er had love a brighter low,
O light his torches warly,
At the bright ee an' blithesome brow
Of bonny Meg o' Marley.

North. A simple matter—but well worth Joseph Hume's four hours' speech, and forty-seven resolutions.

[*Clock strikes ten—folding-doors fly open, and the* Tria Lumina Scotorum *sit down to supper.*

[1] Written by Hogg.

[2] "Bangor" is the name of a tune, which Meg is here represented to have *stown* (stolen) from the clerk in the sense that he fell through it at sight of her beauty, as the minister, in the next two lines, is said to have fallen through the text. This tune is thus alluded to by Burns :—

"Mak haste an' turn King David ower,
An' lilt wi' holy clangor;
O' double verse come gie us four,
An' skirl up the Bangor."—*The Ordination.*

[3] *Snooled*—cowed.

[4] *To ferly*—to wonder.

VIII.

(JULY 1826.)

Scene,—Buchanan Lodge—Porch. Time,—Afternoon.

North, Tickler, Shepherd.

Shepherd. What a changed warld, sirs, since that April forenoon we druve doun to the Lodge in a cotch? I couldna but pity the puir Spring.

Tickler. Not a primrose to salute his feet that shivered in the snow-wreath.

North. Not a lark to hymn his advent in the uncertain sunshine.

Shepherd. No a bit butterflee on its silent waver, meeting the murmur of the straightforward bee.

Tickler. In vain Spring sought his Flora, in haunts beloved of old, on the banks of the shaded rivulet——

North. Or in nooks among the rocky mountains——

Shepherd. Or oases among the heather——

Tickler. Or parterres of grove-guarded gardens——

North. Or within the shadow of veranda——

Shepherd. Or forest glade, where move the antlers of the unhunted red-deer.—In siccan bonny spats hae I often seen the Spring, like a doubtfu' glimmer o' sunshine, appearing and disappearing frae amang the birk-trees, twenty times in the course o' an April day—But, oh! sirs, yon was just a maist detestable forenoon,—and as for the hackney-cotch——

Tickler. The meanest of miseries!

Shepherd. It's waur than sleepin in damp sheets. You haena sat twa hunder yards till your breeks are glued to the clammy seat, that fin's[1] saft and hard aneath you, at ane and

[1] *Fin's*—feels.

the same time, in a maist unaccountable manner. The auld, cracked, stained, faded, tarnished, red leather lining stinks like a tan-yard. Gin you want to let down the window, or pu't up, it's a' alike; you keep rugging at the lang slobbery worsted till it comes aff wi' a tear in your haun, and leaves you at the mercy o' wind and weather,—then what a sharp and continual rattle o' wheels! far waur than a cart; intolerable aneuch ower the macadam, but, Lord hae mercy on us, when you're on the causeway! you could swear the wheels are o' different sizes; up wi' the tae side, doun wi' the tither, sae that nae man can be sufficiently sober to keep his balance. Puch! puch! what dung-like straw aneath your soles; and as for the roof, sae laigh, that you canna keep on your hat, or it'll be dunshed down atower your ee-brees; then, if there's sax or eight o' you in ae fare[1]——

Tickler. Why don't you keep your own carriage, James?

Shepherd. So I do—a gig; but when I happen to forgather wi' sic scrubs as you, that grudge the expense o' a yeckipage o' their ain, I maun submit to a glass-cotch and a' its abominations.

North. How do you like that punch, James?

Shepherd. It's rather ower sair iced, I jalouse, and will be apt to gie ane the toothache; but it has a gran' taste, and a maist seducin smell—Oh! man, that's a bonny ladle! and you hae a nice way o' steerin! Only half-fu', if you please, sir, for thae wine-glasses are perfec tummlers, and though the drink seems to be, when you are preein't, as innocent as the dew o' lauchin lassie's lip, yet it's just as dangerous, and leads insensibly on, by littles and wees, to a state o' unconscious intoxication.

Tickler. I never saw you the worse o' liquor in my life, James.

Shepherd. Nor me you.

North. None but your sober men ever get drunk.

Shepherd. I've observed that many a thousan' times; just as nane but your excessively healthy men ever die. Whene'er I hear in the kintra o' ony man's being killed aff his horse, I ken at ance that he's a sober coof, that's been gettin himsel drunk at Selkirk or Hawick, and sweein aff at a sharp turn

[1] This is a faithful description of the old hackney-coach—a very different vehicle from the smart broughams which now ply upon our streets.

ower the bank, he has played wallop into the water, or is aiblins been fun' lyin in the middle o' the road, wi' his neck dislocate, the doctors canna tell hoo; or ayont the wa' wi' his harns[1] stickin on the coupin-stane.

North. Or foot in stirrup, and face trailing the pebbly mire, swept homewards by a spanking half-bred, and disentangled at the door by shriek and candle-light.

Shepherd. Had he been in the habit o' takin his glass like a Christian, he wad hae ridden like a Centaur; and instead o' havin been brought hame a corp, he wuld hae been staggerin geyan steady into the parlour, wi' a' the weans ruggin at his pouches for fairins,[2] and his wife half angry, half pleased, helping him tidily and tenderly aff wi' his big boots; and then by-and-by mixing him the bowster cup—and then——

Tickler. Your sober man, on every public occasion of festivity, is uniformly seen, soon after "the Duke of York and the Army," led off between two waiters, with his face as white as the table-cloth, eyes upwards, and a ghastly smile about his gaping mouth, that seems to threaten unutterable things before he reach the lobby.

North. He turns round his head at the "three times three," with a loyal hiccup, and is borne off a speechless martyr to the cause of the Hanoverian Succession.

Shepherd. I wad rather get fou five hunder times in an ordinar way like, than ance to expose mysel sae afore my fellow-citizens. Yet, meet my gentleman next forenoon in the Parliament House, or in a bookseller's shop, or in Princes Street, arm-in-arm wi' a minister, and he hauds up his face as if naething had happened, speaks o' the pleasant party, expresses his regret at having been obliged to leave it so soon, at the call of a client, and, ten to ane, denounces you to his cronies for a drunkard, who exposes himself in company, and is getting constantly into scrapes that promise a fatal termination.

North. Hush! The minstrels!

Shepherd. Maist delightfu' music! O, sir, hoo it sweetens, and strengthens, and merrifies as it comes up the avenue! Are they Foreigners?

North. An itinerant family of Savoyards.

[1] *Harns*—brains. [2] *Fairins*—presents.

Shepherd. Look at them—Look at them! What an outlandish, toosy-headed, wee sunbrunt deevil o' a lassie that, playin her antics, heel and head, wi' the tambourine. Yon's a darlin wi' her thoom coquet-coquettin on the guitaur, and makin music without kennin't—a' the while she is curtshyin, and singin wi' lauchin rosy mouth, and then blushin because we're glowering on her, and lettin fa' her big black een on the grun', as if a body were askin for a kiss! That maun be her younger sister, as dark as a gypsey, that hafflins lassie wi' the buddin breast, her that's tinklin on the triangle that surely maun be o' silver, sae dewy sweet the soun'! Safe us, only look at the auld man and his wife! There's mony a comical auld woman in Scotland, especially in the Heclans, but I never saw the match o' that ane. She maun be mony hunder year auld, and yet her petticoats as short as a playactress dancin on the stage. Gude legs too—thin ankles, and a thick calve—girl, wife, and witch a' in ane, and only think o't,—playin on a base drum! Savyaurds! It'll be a mountainous kintra theirs—for sic a lang-backed, short-thee'd, sinewy and muscular, hap-and-stap-jump o' a bouncin body as that man o' hers, wi' the swarthy face and head harlequinaddin on the Pan's-pipes, could never hae been bred and born on a flat——But whish—whish—they're beginning to play something pathetic!

Tickler. Music is the universal language.

Shepherd. It's a lament that the puir wandering creturs are singing and playin about their native land. I wush I may hae ony change in my pocket——

Tickler. They are as happy in their own way as we are in ours, my dear James. May they find their mountain cottage unharmed by wind or weather on their return, and let us join our little subscription—

Shepherd. There's a five-shillin crown-piece for mine.

North. And mine.

Tickler. And mine.

Shepherd. I'll gie't to them.—(*Shepherd leaps out.*)—There, my bonny bloomin brunette wi' the raven hair, that are just perfectly beautifu', wanderin wi' your melody hameless but happy, and may nae hand untie its snood till your bridal night in the hut on the hill, when the evening marriage dance and song are hushed and silent, and love and innocence

in their lawfu' delight lie in each other's arms—If your sweetheart's a shepherd, so am I——

Tickler. Hallo, Hogg—no whispering. Here, give each of them a tumbler of punch, and God be with the joyous Savoyards.

Shepherd. Did you see, sirs, hoo desperate thirsty they a' were—nae wonner, singin frae morn to night a' up and doun the dusty streets and squares. Yet they askt for naething, contented creturs!—Hear till them singin awa doun the avenue "God save the King," in compliment to us and our country. A weel-timed interlude this, Mr North, and it has putten me in a gran' mood for a sang.

North and *Tickler.* A song—a song—a song!

(SHEPHERD *sings.*)

MY BONNY MARY.[1]

Where Yarrow rows among the rocks,
An' wheels an' boils in mony a linn,
A blithe young shepherd fed his flocks,
Unused to branglement or din.
But Love its silken net had thrown
Around his breast so brisk an' airy,
And his blue eyes wi' moisture shone,
As thus he sung of bonny Mary.

"O Mary, thou'rt sae mild an' sweet,
My very being clings about thee,
This heart wad rather cease to beat,
Than beat a lonely thing without thee.
I see thee in the evening beam,
A radiant glorious apparition;
I see thee in the midnight dream,
By the dim light of heavenly vision.

"When over Benger's haughty head
The morning breaks in streaks sae bonny,
I climb the mountain's velvet side,
For quiet rest I get nae ony.
How sweet the brow on Brownhill cheek,
Where many a weary hour I tarry!
For there I see the twisted reek
Rise frae the cot where dwells my Mary.

[1] By Hogg.

"When Phœbus mounts outower the muir,
His gowden locks a' streaming gaily,
When morn has breathed its fragrance pure,
An' life, an' joy, ring through the valley,
I drive my flocks to yonder brook,
The feeble in my arms I carry,
Then every lammie's harmless look
Brings to my mind my bonny Mary.

"Oft has the lark sung o'er my head,
And shook the dew-draps frae her wing,
Oft hae my flocks forgot to feed,
And round their shepherd form'd a ring.
Their looks condole the lee-lang day,
While mine are fixed an' canna vary,
Aye turning down the westlan brae,
Where dwells my loved, my bonny Mary.

"When gloaming o'er the welkin steals,
And haps[1] the hills in solemn grey,
And bitterns, in their airy wheels,
Amuse the wanderer on his way;
Regardless of the wind or rain,
With cautious step and prospect wary,
I often trace the lonely glen,
To steal a sight o' bonny Mary.

"When midnight draws her curtain deep,
And lays the breeze amang the bushes,
And Yarrow, in her sounding sweep,
By rocks and ruins raves and rushes;
Then, sunk in short and restless sleep,
My fancy wings her flight so airy,
To where sweet guardian spirits keep
Their watch around the couch of Mary.

"The exile may forget his home,
Where blooming youth to manhood grew,
The bee forget the honeycomb,
Nor with the spring his toil renew;
The sun may lose his light and heat,
The planets in their rounds miscarry,
But my fond heart shall cease to beat
When I forget my bonny Mary."

Tickler. Equal to anything of Burns'.
North. Not a better in all George Thomson's collection.

[1] *Haps*—wraps.

Thank ye, James—God bless you, James—give me your hand—you're a most admirable fellow—and there's no end to your genius.

Shepherd. A man may be sair mistaen about mony things—such as yepics, and tragedies, and tales, and even lang-set elegies about the death o' great public characters, and hymns, and odds, and the like—but he canna be mistaen about a sang. As soon's it's doun on the sclate, I ken whether it's gude, bad, or middlin—if ony o' the twa last, I dight it out wi' my elbow—if the first, I copy't ower into write, and then get it aff by heart, when it's as sure o' no being lost as if it were engraven on a brass-plate; for though I hae a treacherous memory about things in ordinar, a' my happy sangs will cleave to my heart till my dying day, and I shouldna wonder gin I was to croon a verse or twa frae some o' them on my death-bed.

North. Once more we thank you, my dear James. There, the chill is quite gone—and I think I have been almost as happy in this bowl as you have been in your inimitable lyric.

Tickler. What think you, Kit, of the Rev. Cæsar Malan?[1]

North. What think you, Timothy, of his audience?

Shepherd. A French sermon in a chapel in Rose Street o' Embro' for purchasing the freedom o' a black wench in the West Indies! He maun hae been a man o' genius that first started the idea, for it's a'thegither out o' the ordinary course o' nature. Was you there, Mr Tickler?

Tickler. I was. But you will pardon me, James, when I tell you how it happened. I was going to order a cheese at Mrs M'Alpine's shop, when I found myself unexpectedly walking in a hurried procession. Being in a somewhat passive mood, for the cheese had been a mere passing thought, I sailed along with the stream, and ere long found myself sitting in a pew between two very good-looking middle-aged women, in Dunstable bonnets, streaming with ribbons, and tastily enveloped in half-withdrawn green veils, that on either side descended to my shoulder.

Shepherd. Mr North, did you ever ken ony chiel fa' on his feet at a' times like Mr Tickler? He never gangs out to walk in the Meadows, or doun to Leith, or roun' the Calton, or up Arthur's Seat, or out-by yonder to Duddistone, but he

[1] An eminent clergyman of Geneva.

is sure to forgather, as if by appointment, wi' some bonny leddy, wha cleeks his arm wi' little pressin, and then walks off wi' him, looking up and laughing sae sweetly in his face, and takin half-a-dizzen wee bit triflin fairy steps to ane o' his lang strides, till they disappear ayont the horizon.

North. But let us hear about Cæsar Malan and the negro wench.

Shepherd. It's the same way wi' him in the kintra—at kirk or market. The women-folk a' crowd round him like fascinated creatures——

North. Whom are you speaking of, James?—the Rev. Cesar Malan?

Shepherd. Na, na—the Rev. Timothy Tickler, wha'll preach a better sermon than ony Genevese Frenchman that ever snivelled.

Tickler. Cæsar, to my astonishment, began to speak French, and then I remembered the advertisement. I whispered to the Dunstable Dianas, that they must be my interpreters—but they confessed themselves ignorant of the Gallic tongue.

Shepherd. No ane in ten, ay twenty—forty—were able to make him out, tak my word for't. It's a very different thing parleyvouing about the weather, and following out a discourse frae the poupit in a strange tongue. But I'm thinking Mr Malan 'll be a gude-looking fallow, wi' a heigh nose and gleg een, and a saft insinuatin manner——

Tickler. A gentlemanly-looking man enough, James, and even something of an orator, though rather wishy-washy.

Shepherd. And then, och, och! the shamefu' absurdity o' the subjec! Thousan's and thousan's o' our ain white brithers and sisters literally starving in every manufacturin toun in Scotland, and a Frenchman o' the name o' Cæsar colleckin platefu's o' siller, I'se warrant, to be sent aff to the Wast Indies, to buy an abstract idea for an ugly black wench, wha suckles her weans outower her shouther!

North. Why, James, that is the custom of the country.

Shepherd. And an ugly custom it is, and maist disgustfu'; at least when you compare't wi' the bosoms o' our ain nursing matrons.

North. An odd reason, James, for charity——

Shepherd. Nae odd reason at a', Mr North. I mainteen, that at the present creesis, when thousands o' bonny white

callans are tining the roses out o' their cheeks for verra hunger—and thousands o' growin lasses sittin disconsolate wi' cames sae trig in their silken hair, although they hae been obliged to sell their claes to buy bread for their parents—and thousands o' married women, that greet when they look on their unemployed and starving husbands—I mainteen, Mr North, that under such affecting, distressing circumstances o' our ain hame-condition, the he, or the she, or the it, that troubles their head about Wast India Niggers, and gangs to glower like a gawpus at a Gallic gull-grupper gollaring out geggery about some gruesome black doudy—stinking amang her piccaninnies——

Tickler. I plead guilty, James.

Shepherd. Were there nae white slaves, sir, about the door-cheek, haudin out their hauns for an awmous? Nae sickly auld widows, wi' baskets aneath their arms, pretendin to be selling tape, and thread, and chap ballads or religious tracts, but, in truth, appealin wi' silent looks to the charity o' the ingoers and outcomers, a' gossipin about the Rev. Mr Cæsar Malan?

North. What! are there slaves in Scotland, James?

Shepherd. Ay—ae half o' mankind, sir, are slaves a' ower the face o' the earth. I'm no gaun to blether about the Wast Indian question to a man like you, Mr North, wha kens a' the ins and the outs o't, better than ony abolitionist that ever sacrificed the sincerity o' his soul at the shrine o' East Indian sugar.

Tickler. Hear—hear—hear.—Encore—"The shrine o' East Indian sugar!"

North. Speaking of the West India question, there is a great deal too much impertinence in Mr Coleridge's *Six Months' Visit*.[1] An old man like myself may with some difficulty be excused for occasionally drivelling about his rheumatism, all the world knowing his martyrdom; but who can endure this conceited mannikin, apparently because he is the nephew of a bishop, prating, in print, of his bodily infirmities, in a style that might sicken a horse or an apothecary?

Tickler. Scotch and English puppies make a striking contrast. The Scotch puppy sports philosophical, and sets to

[1] *Six Months' Visit to the West Indies.* By HENRY COLERIDGE, a nephew of S. T. Coleridge.

rights Locke, Smith, Stewart, and Reid. In his minority he is as solemn as a major of two-score—sits at table, even during dinner, with an argumentative face, and in a logical position—and gives out his sentences deliberately, as if he were making a payment in sovereigns.

Shepherd. Oh, man, how I do hate sic formal young chiels—reason, reason, reasoning on things that you maun see whether you will or no, even gin you were to shut your een wi' a' your force, and then cover them wi' a bandage—chiels that are employed frae morning to nicht colleckin facks out o' books, in that dark, dirty dungeon the Advocates' Leebrary, and that'll no hesitate, wi' a breach o' a' gude manners, to correct your verra chronology when you're in the middle o' a story that may hae happened equally weel ony day frae the flood to the last judgment—chiels that quote Mr Jeffrey and Hairy Cobrun, and even on their first introduction to Englishers, keep up a clatter about the Ooter-House—chiels that think it a great maitter to spoot aff by heart an oraution on the corn laws, in that puir puckit Gogotha, the Speculative Society, and treat you, ower the nits and prunes, wi' skreeds o' College Essays on Syllogism, and what's ca'd the Association o' Ideas—chiels that would rather be a Judge o' the Court o' Session that the Great Khan o' Tartary himsel—and look prouder, when taking their forenoon's airing, alang Princes Street, on a bit shachlin[1] ewe-necked powney, coft frae a sportin flesher, than Saladin, at the head of ten thousand chosen chivalry, shaking the desert—chiels——

North. Stop, James—just look at Tickler catching flies.

Shepherd. Sound asleep, as I'm a Contributor. Oh! man—I wush we had a saut herring to put intil the mooth o' him, or a burned cork to gie him mistashies, or a string o' ingans to fasten to the nape o' his neck by way o' a pigtail, or——

North. Shamming Abraham.

Shepherd. Na—he's in a sort o' dwam—and nae wonner, for the Lodge is just a verra Castle o' Indolence. Thae broad vine-leaves hingin in the veranda in the breathless heat, or stirrin when the breeze sughs by, like water-lilies tremblin in the swell o' the blue loch-water, inspire a dreamin somnolency that the maist waukrife[2] canna a'thegither resist; and the bonny twilight, chequering the stane floor a' round

[1] *Shachlin*—shuffling. [2] *Waukrife*—watchful.

and round the shady Lodge, keeps the thochts confined within its glimmerin boundaries, till every cause o' disturbance is afar off, and the life o' man gets tranquil as a wean's rest in its cradle, or amang the gowans on a sunny knowe; sae let us speak lown and no wauken him, for he's buried in the umbrage o' imagination, and weel ken I what a heavenly thing it is to soom doun the silent stream o' that haunted world.

North. What say you to that smile on his face, James?

Shepherd. It's a gey wicked ane—I'm thinkin he's after some mischief. I'll put this raisin-stalk up his nose. Mercy on us, what a sneeze!

Tickler (*starting and looking round*). Ha! Hogg, my dear fellow, how are you? Soft—soft—I have it—why that hotch-potch, and that afternoon sun——But—but—what of Master Coleridge, is he a Prig?

North. Besides the counterfeited impertinence of my rheumatism, he treats the ladies and gentlemen who peruse his *Six Months' Visit* with eternal assurances that he is a young man—that his stomach is often out of order—and that he always travels with a medicine-chest—and that he is a very sweaty young gentleman.

Shepherd. That's really a disgustfu' specie o' yegotism. But is't true?

North. May I request you, James, to get me the volume. That's it beside Juno—

> There at the foot of yonder nodding bitch,
> That wreathes her old fantastic tail so low.

Shepherd. Nine and saxpence for a bit volumm like that, and a' about the state o' the author's stomach and bowels! But let's hear some extracks.

North. "I was steamed by one, showered by another, just escaped needling by a third, and was nearly boiled to the consistency of a pudding for the love of an oblong gentleman of Ireland," &c.

Shepherd. That's geyan stupid, but excusable aneuch wut in a verra young lad. Anither extrack.

North. "I went simply and sheerly on my own account, or rather on account of the aforesaid rheumatism; for as every other sort of chemical action had failed, I was willing to try if fusion would succeed."—"If Yorick had written after me, he

would have mentioned the Rheumatic Traveller."—"This book is rheumatism from beginning to end."—"I rarely argue a matter unless my shoulders or knees ache."—"I trust they will think it is my rheumatism that chides."—

Shepherd. I'm afraid that's geyan puppyish; but still, as I said before, I can excuse a laddie anxious to be enterteenin. Anither extrack.

North. "I sat bolt upright, and for some time contemplated, by the glimmering of the lantern, the huge disarray of my pretty den. I fished for my clothes, but they were bathing; I essayed to rise, but I could find no resting-place for the sole of a rheumatic foot."

Tickler. Curse the whelp! — fling the book over the laburnums.

North. There it goes. Go where he will—do what he will —Master Coleridge is perpetually perspiring during his whole Six Months' Visit to the West Indies. He must have been very unpleasant company — especially as he was a valetudinarian. Had he been in fine fresh health, it might have passed; but what a nuisance a cabin passenger with the sallow and the sweating sickness!

Shepherd. Is he dead noo?

North. Not at all.

Shepherd. That's maist inexcusable.

North. He tells the world upwards of fifty times that he was at Eton—and——

Tickler. What the devil is the meaning of all this botheration about the Diary of an Invalid? Let the puppy keep his own kennel.

North. I believe my temper was a little ruffled just now by the recollection of an article in the *Quarterly Review*,[1] of which this poor prig's performance was the text-book. All the quotations were most loathsome. Fowell Buxton[2] is no great witch, but he has more sense, and knowledge too, in his little finger than this most perspiring young genius has in all his cranium. The *Six Months' Visit* should have been a book of Colburn's.

Tickler. Colburn has published many valuable, interesting,

[1] No. LXVI., for March 1826, p. 490.

[2] Afterwards Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, sometime member of Parliament, and a zealous advocate for the abolition of slavery in our West Indian colonies. He died in 1845.

and successful books, within these few years, and I wish him that success in his trade which his enterprising spirit deserves.

North. So do I, and here's "The Trade,"[1] if you please, in a bumper.

Shepherd. The Trcad—The Tread—The Tread—Hurraw—hurraw—hurraw!

North. But if he persists in that shameful and shameless puffery, which he has too long practised, the public will turn away with nausea from every volume that issues from his shop; and men of genius, scorning to submit their works to the pollution of his unprincipled paragraph-mongers, will shun a publisher who, contrary to his natural sense and honour, has been betrayed into a system that, were it to become general, would sink the literary character into deep degradation, till the name "Author" would become a byword of reproach and insult, and the mere suspicion of having written a book be sufficient ground for expulsion from the society of gentlemen.

Tickler. Colburn, James, must have sent puffs of *Vivian Grey*[2] to all the newspapers, fastening the authorship on various gentlemen, either by name or inuendo; thus attaching an interest to the book, at the sacrifice of the feelings of those gentlemen, and, I may add, the feelings of his own conscience. The foolish part of the public thus set agoing after *Vivian Grey*, for example, puff after puff continues to excite fading curiosity; and Colburn, knowing all the while that the writer is an obscure person, for whom nobody cares a straw, chuckles over the temporary sale, and sees the names of distinguished writers opprobriously bandied about by the blackguards of the press, indifferent to everything but the "Monish" which he is thus enabled to scrape together from defrauded purchasers, who, on the faith of puff and paragraph, believed the paltry catchpenny to be from the pen of a man of genius and achievement.

North. As far as I know, he is the only publisher guilty of this crime, and,

> "If old judgments hold their sacred course,"

there will come a day of punishment.

Tickler. Among the many useful discoveries of this age,

[1] The Book-trade is *the* trade *par excellence.*

[2] *Vivian Grey* was the juvenile production of the Right Honourable Benjamin Disraeli, Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1852.

none more so, my dear Hogg, than that poets are a set of very absurd inhabitants of this earth. The simple fact of their presuming to have a language of their own, should have dished them centuries ago. A pretty kind of language to be sure it was; and, conscious themselves of its absurdity, they palmed it upon the Muses, and justified their own use of it on the plea of inspiration!

North. Till, in course of time, an honest man of the name of Wordsworth was born, who had too much integrity to submit to the law of their lingo, and, to the anger and astonishment of the order, began to speak in good, sound, sober, intelligible prose. Then was a revolution. All who adhered to the ancient regime became in a few years utterly incomprehensible, and were coughed down by the public. On the other hand, all those who adopted the new theory observed that they were merely accommodating themselves to the language of their brethren of mankind.

Tickler. Then the pig came snorting out of the poke, and it appeared that no such thing as poetry, essentially distinct from prose, could exist. True, that there are still some old women and children who rhyme; but the breed will soon be extinct, and a poet in Scotland be as scarce as a capercailzie.

North. Since the extinction, therefore, of English poetry, there has been a wide extension of the legitimate province of prose. People who have got any genius find that they may traverse it as they will, on foot, on horseback, or in chariot.

Tickler. A Pegasus with wings always seemed to me a silly and inefficient quadruped. A horse was never made to fly on feathers, but to gallop on hoofs. You destroy the idea of his peculiar powers the moment you clap pinions to his shoulder, and make him paw the clouds.

North. Certainly. How poor the image of

> "Heaven's warrior-horse, beneath his fiery form,
> Paws the light clouds and gallops on the storm,"

to one of Wellington's aid-de-camps, on an English hunter, charging his way through the French Cuirassiers, to order up the Scotch Greys against the Old Guard moving on to redeem the disastrous day of Waterloo!

Tickler. Poetry, therefore, being by universal consent exploded, all men, women, and children are at liberty to use

what style they choose, provided it be in the form of prose. Cram it full of imagery, as an egg is full of meat. If *caller*,[1] down it will go, and the reader be grateful for his breakfast. Pour it out simple, like whey, or milk and water, and a swallow will be found enamoured of the liquid murmur. Let it gurgle forth, rich and racy, like a haggis, and there are stomachs that will not scunner. Fat paragraphs will be bolted like bacon; and, as he puts a period to the existence of a lofty climax, the reader will exclaim, "O, the roast beef of Old England, and, oh! the English roast beef!"

North. Well said, Tickler. That prose composition should always be a plain, uncondimented dish, is a dogma no longer endurable. Henceforth I shall show, not only favour, but praise, to all prose books that contain any meaning, however small; whereas I shall use all vampers, like the great American shrike, commemorated in last Number, who sticks small singing-birds on sharp-pointed thorns, and leaves them sticking there in the sunshine, a rueful, if not a saving spectacle to the choristers of the grove.

Shepherd. Haver awa, gentlemen—haver awa,—you'se hae a' your ain way o't, for onything I care—but gin either the tane or the tither o' you could write verses at a' passable, you would haud a different theory. What think you o' a prose sang? What would Burns's "Mary in Heaven" be out o' verse? or Moore's Melodies—or——

Tickler. The *Queen's Wake.*

Shepherd. It's no worth while repeatin a' the nonsense, Mr North, that you and Tickler 'll speak in the course o' an afternoon, when your twa lang noses forgather ower a bowl o' punch. But I've a poem in my pouch that'll pull down your theories wi' a single stanza. I got it frae Δ this forenoon, wha kent I was gaun to the Lodge to my denner, and I'll read it aloud whether you wull or no;—but, deevil tak it, I've lost my specs! I maun hae drawn them out, on the way doun, wi' my hankercher. I maun hae them adverteesed.

Tickler. There, James, mine will suit you.

Shepherd. Yours! What, glowerin green anes! Aneuch to gie a body the jaundice!

North. Feel your nose, James.

Shepherd. Weel, that's waur than the butcher swearing

[1] *Caller*—fresh.

through his teeth for his knife, wi' hit[1] in his mouth a' the while. Hae I been sittin wi' specs a' the afternoon?

North. You have, James, and very gash have you looked.

Shepherd. Oo! Oo! I recollec noo. I put them on when that bonny dark-haired, pale-faced, jimp-waisted lassie came in wi' a fresh velvet cushin for Mr North's foot. And the sicht o' her being gude for sair een, I clean forgot to tak aff the specs. But wheish—here's an answer to your theories!

A DIRGE.[2]

Weep not for her!—Oh she was far too fair,
Too pure to dwell on this guilt-tainted earth!
The sinless glory, and the golden air
Of Zion, seem'd to claim her from her birth:
A spirit wander'd from its native zone,
Which, soon discovering, took her for its own:
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her!—Her span was like the sky,
Whose thousand stars shine beautiful and bright;
Like flowers, that know not what it is to die;
Like long-link'd, shadeless months of Polar light;
Like Music floating o'er a waveless lake,
While Echo answers from the flowery brake:
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her!—She died in early youth,
Ere hope had lost its rich romantic hues;
When human bosoms seem'd the homes of truth,
And earth still gleam'd with beauty's radiant dews,
Her summer-prime waned not to days that freeze;
Her wine of life was run not to the lees:
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her!—By fleet or slow decay,
It never grieved her bosom's core to mark
The playmates of her childhood wane away,
Her prospects wither, or her hopes grow dark;
Translated by her God, with spirit shriven,
She pass'd as 'twere in smiles from earth to Heaven:
Weep not for her!

[1] *Wi' hit*—with it.

[2] By D. M. Moir, the well-known Δ of *Blackwood's Magazine.*

Weep not for her!—It was not hers to feel
The miseries that corrode amassing years,
'Gainst dreams of baffled bliss the heart to steel,
To wander sad down Age's vale of tears,
As whirl the wither'd leaves from Friendship's tree,
And on earth's wintry wold alone to be:
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her!—She is an angel now,
And treads the sapphire floors of Paradise;
All darkness wiped from her refulgent brow,
Sin, sorrow, suffering, banish'd from her eyes:
Victorious over death, to her appear
The vista'd joys of Heaven's eternal year:
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her!—Her memory is the shrine
Of pleasant thoughts, soft as the scent of flowers,
Calm as on windless eve the sun's decline,
Sweet as the song of birds among the bowers,
Rich as a rainbow with its hues of light,
Pure as the moonshine of an autumn night:
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her!—There is no cause for woe;
But rather nerve the spirit, that it walk
Unshrinking o'er the thorny paths below,
And from earth's low defilements keep thee back:
So, when a few fleet severing years have flown,
She'll meet thee at Heaven's gate– and lead thee on!
Weep not for her!

Omnes. Beautiful—beautiful—beautiful—beautiful indeed!

North. James, now that you have seen us in summer, how do you like the Lodge?

Shepherd. There's no sic anither house, Mr North, baith for elegance and comfort, in a' Scotland.

North. In my old age, James, I think myself not altogether unentitled to the luxuries of learned leisure—Do you find that sofa easy and commodious?

Shepherd. Easy and commodious! What! it has a' the saftness o' a bed, and a' the coolness o' a bank; yielding rest without drowsiness, and without snoring repose.

Tickler. No sofa like a chair! See James, how I am lying and sitting at the same time! carelessly diffused, yet——

Shepherd. You're a maist extraordinary feegur, Mr Tickler, I humbly confess that, wi' your head imbedded in a cushion, and your een fixed on the roof like an astronomer; and your endless legs stretched out to the extremities o' the yearth; and your lang arms hanging down to the verra floor, atower the bend o' the chair-settee, and only lift up, wi' a magnificent wave, to bring the bottom o' the glass o' cauld punch to rest upon your chin; and wi' that tamboured waistcoat o' the fashion o' aughty-aught, like a meadow yellow wi' dandylions; and breeks——

Tickler. Check your hand, and change your measure, my dear Shepherd.—Oh! for a portrait of North!

Shepherd. I daurna try't, for his ee masters me; and I fear to tak the same leeberties wi' Mr North that I sometimes venture upon wi' you, Mr Tickler. Yet, oh man! I like him weel in that black neckerchief: it brings out his face grandly—and the green coat o' the Royal Archers gies him a Robin-Hoodish character, that makes ane's imagination think o' the umbrage o' auld oaks, and the glimmering silence o' forests.

Tickler. He blushes.

Shepherd. That he does—and I like to see the ingenuous blush o' bashfu' modesty on a wrinkled cheek. It proves that the heart's-blood is warm and free, and the circulation vigorous. Deil tak me, Mr North, if I dinna think you're something like his majesty the King.

North. I am proud that you love the Lodge. There! a bold breeze from the sea! Is not that a pleasant rustle, James?—and lo! every sail on the Firth is dancing on the blue bosom of the waters, and brightening like sea-mews in the sunshine!

Shepherd. After a', in het wather, there's naething like a marine villa. What for dinna ye big[1] a Yott?

North. My sailing days are over, James; but mine is now the ship of Fancy, who can go at ten knots in a dead calm, and carry her sky-scrapers in a storm.

Shepherd. Nae wonder, after sic a life o' travel by sea and land, you should hae found a hame at last, and sic a hame! A' the towers, and spires, and pillars, and pinnacles, and bewilderments o' blue house-roofs, seen frae the tae front through amang the leafy light o' interceptin trees—and frae the tither, where we are noo sitting, only here and there a bit sprinklin o' villas, and then atower the grove-heads seeming sae thick and saft, that you think you might lie down on them and tak

[1] *Big*—build.

a sleep, the murmuring motion o' the never weary sea! Oh, Mr North, that you would explain to me the nature o' the tides!

North. When the moon——

Shepherd. Stap, stap; I couldna command my attention wi' yon bonny brig huggin the shores o' Inchkeith[1] sae lovingly —at first I thocht she was but a breakin wave.

North. Wave, cloud, bird, sunbeam, shadow or ship—often know I not one from the other, James, when half-sleeping half-waking, in the debatable and border land between realities and dreams,

> "My weary length at noontide would I stretch,
> And muse upon the world that wavers by."

Tickler. Yet I never saw you absent in company, North.

North. Nor, I presume, spit on the carpet.

Shepherd. The ane's just as bad as the ither, or rather the first's the warst o' the twa. What right has ony man to leave his ugly carcass in the room, by itsel, without a soul in't? Surely there could be nae cruelty or uncourtesy in kickin't out o' the door. Absent in company indeed!

Tickler. Look at the ninny's face, with his mouth open and his eyes fixed on the carpet, his hand on his chin, and his head a little to the one side—in a fit of absence.

North. Thinking, perhaps, about ginger-beer or a radish.

Shepherd. Or determining which pair o' breeks he shall draw on when he gangs out to sooper—or his mind far awa in Montgomery's shop, tasting something sweet—or makin profoun' calculation about buyin a second-hand gig—or thinkin himsel waitin for a glass o' mineral water at St Bernard's Wall—or tryin on a foraging-cap for sleepin in cotches—or believin himsel stannin at the window o' a prent-shop, lookin at Miss Foote's *pas seul*—or forgettin he's no in the kirk, and nae occasion to be sleepy,—or deluded into a belief that he is spittin ower a brig—or——

Tickler. Stop, James, stop. You are a whale running off with a thousand fathom——

Shepherd. Thank ye, Mr Tickler. I was beginning to get ower copious. But —— I wonner what made me think the noo o' the Author o' the *Modern Athens*.[2] What for didna ye tak him through hauns, Mr North?

[1] An island in the Firth of Forth near Edinburgh.

[2] Robert Mudie was the author of *Modern Athens* (*i.e.* Edinburgh), and many other works, most or all of which are now forgotten. He died in 1842.

North. Because I think him a man of some talent; and, for the sake of talent, I can overlook much, seeing that blockheads are on the increase.

Shepherd. On the increase, say ye?

North. I fear so. Now, he is miserably poor. And knowing that many dull dogs dine at shilling ordinaries (beef, bread, and beer, with some vegetables) regularly once a-day, when he, who is really a man of merit, can afford to do so only on Tuesdays and Fridays, he naturally gets irritated and misanthropical; and what wonder, if, on the dinnerless afternoons, he writes what he would not commit on a full stomach, and much that he would sincerely repent of over a tureen of hotch-potch or a haggis?

Tickler. You hear the rumbling of empty bowels, poor fellow, in his happiest passages.

Shepherd. But wull you tell me that being puir's ony reason for being a blackguard?

North. You mistake me—I did not say, James, that the author of *Modern Athens* is absolutely a blackguard. The usage, too, that he met with in his native country—literally kicked out of it, you know—could not but ruffle and sour his temper; and such is my opinion both of his head and heart, that, but for that unlucky application to his posteriors, I verily believe he might have been somewhat of an honest man, and a libeller merely of foreign countries.

Shepherd. Weel—it's verra gude in you, Mr North, to make sic an ingenious defence for the scoonrel; but I canna forgie him for abusin alike the lasses and the leddies o' Scotland.

North. There are lassies and leddies in Scotland, my dear James, of whom you know nothing—houses where, it is obvious from his writings, the author of *Modern Athens* must have had his howf;[1]—and really, when one considers from what originals he painted his portraits of Edina's girlery, the wonder is that his daubings are not even more disgusting than they are; but the likenesses are strong, although his nymphs must have been unsteady sitters.

Tickler. Poor devil! suppose we send him a few pounds——

Shepherd. I wad dae[2] nae sic thing. You canna serve sic chiels by charity. It does them nae gude. Neither am I convinced that he wouldna tell lees when he's no hungry. Yon wasna a solid argument about the empty stomach. Sic

[1] *Howf*—haunt. [2] *Dae*—do.

a neerdoweel wadna scruple to utter falsehoods in the face o' a round o' beef. Cram him till he's like to burst, and he'll throw up onything but truth—loosen his shirt-neck when he's lying dead-drunk on a form, and he'll unconsciously ettle at a lee in maudlin syllablings, till his verra vomit is a libel, and falsehood rancifies the fume o' the toasted cheese that sickness brings harlin out o' his throat in a gin-shower aneuch to sicken a fulzie-man.[1]

North. Stop, James, stop—that's out of all bounds——

Tickler. By the by, North, I have a letter from Mullion in my pocket, apologising, I believe, for not dining here to-day. There it is, folded up in the Secretary's usual business-like style.

North (*reading*). Why, it's an article.

Shepherd. An article—let's hear't. Mullion and me never agrees verra weel in company; but when he's absent I hae a great kindness for him, and naebody can dispute his abeelities.

North. It seems a sort of parody.

THE BATTLE OF THE BLOCKHEADS.[2]

BY MR SECRETARY MULLION.

AIR—"*Battle of the Baltic.*"

Of Wastle,[3] Hogg, and North,
Sing the glory and renown,
And of Tickler, who came forth
With his bald and shining crown,
As their pens along our page brightly shone;
The knout and searing brand,
In each bold determined hand,
While ODoherty japann'd
Led them on.

Turnipologist[4] and Stot,
All the breeds of Whiggish kine,
Trembled when the streamers flew
Over Blackwood's gallant line:

[1] *Anglicè*, a night-man.

[2] By D. M. Moir.

[3] "Wastle" was a mere mythical contributor to *Blackwood*, and does not appear to have represented any real person in particular.

[4] The story went that the Edinburgh phrenologists had been hoaxed by means of a cast taken from a Swedish turnip. They reported that its organs were very finely developed, and that it was remarkable, in particular, for "tune," "ideality," and "veneration!"

The twentieth of October was the time :
As they scoured proud Learning's path,
Every blockhead dreamt of death,
And Hunt held his stinking breath,
For a time.

But Maga's rage was flushed
In her garb of olive green ;
And her foes, as on she rush'd,
Wish'd for greater space between.
"Pens of pluck !" the Tories cried, when each Gun,
With wit, intellect, and *nous*,
Did pound, pommel knaves, and souse,
Like blithe kitten with poor mouse
Making fun.

They play ! they slay ! they flay !
While untooth'd for all attack,
The old woman[1] o'er the way
To our cheer a scraugh gave back ;—
As sibyl-like she mutter'd our dark doom :—
Then they fled with draggled tail ;
While her young men took leg-bail,
Raising ullaloo and wail
In their gloom.

Blue and Yellow was hail'd then,
By our Editor so brave ;
"We are victors, yet are men,
And old Jeffrey we would save,
From the wise at your prophecies who sneeze :
Then bid Bryan Procter beat
To dramaticals retreat,
And bring Hazlitt to our feet
On his knees."

Then the *London* blest our North,
That he let the dull repose ;
And the plaudits of his worth,
Spake each Cockney through his nose,
Glad to bundle off whole-skinn'd from the fray ;
But all England laugh'd outright
At their poor and piteous plight,
And subscribers taking flight,
Waned away.

[1] *Constable's Magazine.*

Now joy, bold comrades, raise!
For these tidings of our might,
By this lamp, whose patent blaze
Holds photometers in spite;
But yet, amid fun, fuddle, and uproar,
Let us think of Tims, who keeps
Hand on hinderland, and weeps
That no golden grain he reaps
From Victoire.[1]

Lean pates! to Whiggish pride
Aye so faithful and so true,
Who in pan of scorn were fried,
With grey Jerry,[2] the old shrew:
The *Westminster's* fond wings o'er you wave!
While loud is Hazlitt's growl,
And Hunt and Hone condole,
Singing sonnets to the soul
Of each knave!

Shepherd. It soun's as gin it was gude—but I'm sick o' a' that clan, and canna be amused wi' even true wut wasted upon them; besides, the dowgs hae had their day—hae died o' the mange, and been buried in the dunghill.

Tickler. There, my dear bard, conquer your disgust by a peep into this volume.

Shepherd. Dog on't, Mr Tickler, gin I hadna jouked[3] there. you had felled me—but—ou ay!—a volume of Mrs Radcliffe's[4] Posthumous Warks. Poems, too! I'm sure they'll be bonny, for she was a true genius.

Tickler. Kit, smoke his eyes, how they glare!

Shepherd. The description is just perfectly beautifu'. Here's the way o' readin out poetry.

"On the bright margin of Italia's shore,
Beneath the glance of summer-noon we stray,
And, indolently happy, ask no more
Than cooling airs that o'er the ocean play.

"And watch the bark, that, on the busy strand,
Washed by the sparkling tide, awaits the gale,
Till, high among the shrouds, the sailor band
Gallantly shout, and raise the swelling sail.

[1] See *ante*, p. 32, note 2.
[2] *Jerry*—Jeremy Bentham. Born 1749; died 1832.
[3] *Jouked*—dodged.
[4] Mrs Radcliffe died in 1823, aged 59.

"On the broad deck a various group recline,
Touch'd with the moonlight, yet half-hid in shade;
Who, silent, watch the bark the coast resign,
The Pharos lessen, and the mountains fade.

"We, indolently happy, watch alone
The wandering airs that o'er the ocean stray,
To bring some sad Venetian sonnet's tone,
From that lone vessel floating far away!"

North. I wish you would review these four volumes, James, for next Number.

Shepherd. Tuts—What's the use o' reviewin? Naething like a skreed o' extracts into a magazeen taken in the kintra. When I fa' on, tooth and nail, on an article about some new wark, oh, Mr North, but I'm wud when I see the cretur that's undertaken to review't, settin himsel wi' clenched teeth to compose a philosophic creeticism, about the genius o' an owther that every man kens as weel as his ain face in the glass—and then comparing him wi' this, and contrastin him wi' that—and informin you which o' his warks are best, and which warst, and which middlin — balancin a genius against himsel, and settin his verra merits against his character and achievements—instead o' telling you at ance what the plot is about, and how it begins, and gangs on, and is wunded up; in short, pithy hints o' the characters that feegur throughout the story, and a maisterly abridgment o' facts and incidents, wi' noo and then an elucidatory observation, and a glowing panegyric; but, aboon a' things else, lang, lang, lang extracts, judiciously seleckit, and lettin you ken at ance if the owther has equalled or excelled himsel, or if he has struck out a new path, or followed the auld ane into some unsuspeckit scenery o' bonny underwood, or lofty standards—or whether——but I'm out o' breath, and maun hae a drink.—Thank you, Mr North—that's the best bowl you've made yet.

Tickler. I never had any professed feeling of the *super* or *preter*-natural in a printed book. Very early in life I discovered that a ghost, who had kept me in a cold sweat during a whole winter's midnight, was a tailor who haunted the house, partly through love, and partly through hunger, being

enamoured of my nurse, and of the fat of ham which she gave him with mustard, between two thick shaves[1] of a quartern loaf, and afterwards a bottle of small-beer to wash it down, before she yielded him the parting kiss. After that I slept soundly, and had a contempt for ghosts, which I retain to this day.

Shepherd. Weel, it's verra different wi' me. I should be feared yet even for the ninth pairt o' a ghost, and I fancy a tailor has nae mair;—but I'm no muckle affeckit by reading about them—an oral tradition out o' the mouth o' an auld grey-headed man or woman is far best, for then you canna dout the truth o' the tale, unless ye dout a' history thegither, and then, to be sure, you'll end in universal skepticism.

North. Don't you admire the romances of the Enchantress of Udolpho?

Shepherd. I hae nae doubt, sir, that had I read *Udolpho* and her ither romances in my boyish days, that my hair would hae stood on end like that o' ither folk, for, by nature and education baith, ye ken, I'm just excessive superstitious. But afore her volumes fell into my hauns, my soul had been frichtened by a' kinds of traditionary terrors, and mony hunder times hae I maist swarfed[2] wi' fear in lonesome spats in muirs and woods, at midnicht, when no a leevin thing was movin but mysel and the great moon. Indeed, I canna say that I ever fan' mysel alane in the hush o' darkened nature, without a beatin at my heart; for a sort o' spiritual presence aye hovered about me—a presence o' something like and unlike my ain being—at times felt to be solemn and nae mair—at times sae awfu' that I wushed mysel nearer ingle-licht—and ance or twice in my lifetime, sae terrible that I could hae prayed to sink down into the moss, sae that I micht be saved frae the quaking o' that ghostly wilderness o' a world that wasna for flesh and bluid!

North. Look—James—look—what a sky!

Shepherd. There'll be thunder the morn. These are the palaces o' the thunder, and before daybreak every window will pour forth lichtnin. Mrs Radcliffe has weel described mony sic, but I have seen some that can be remembered, but never, never painted by mortal pen; for after a', what is

[1] *Shaves*—slices. [2] *Swarfed*—swooned.

ony description by us puir creturs o' the works o' the Great God?

North. Perhaps it is a pity that Mrs Radcliffe never introduced into her stories any real ghosts.

Shepherd. I canna just a'thegither think sae. Gin you introduce a real ghost at a', it maun appear but seldom—seldom, and never but on some great or dread account—as the ghost o' Hamlet's father. Then, what difficulty in makin it speak with a tomb voice! At the close o' the tale, the mind would be shocked unless the dead had burst its cerements for some end which the dead alane could have accomplished—unless the catastrophe were worthy an Apparition. How few events, and how few actors would, as the story shut itself up, be felt to have been of such surpassing moment as to have deserved the very laws o' nature to have been in a manner changed for their sakes, and shadows brought frae amang the darkness o' burial-places, that seem to our imaginations locked up frae a' communion wi' the breathin world!

North. In highest tragedy, a Spirit may be among the *dramatis personæ*—for the events come all on processionally, and under a feeling of fate.

Shepherd. There, too, you *see* the ghost; and indifferently personated though it may be, the general hush proves that religion is the deepest principle o' our nature, and that even the vain shows o' a theatre can be sublimed by an awe-struck sadness, when, revisiting the glimpses o' the moon, and makin night hideous, comes glidin in and awa in cauld unringin armour, or unsubstantial vapour, a being whose eyes ance saw the cheerfu' sunlight, and whose footsteps ance brought out echoes frae the flowery earth.

North. In this posthumous tale of Mrs Radcliffe—I forget the name—a real ghost is the chief agent, and is two or three times brought forward with good effect; but I confess, James, that agreeably to your excellent observations, I became somewhat too much hand-in-glove with his ghostship, and that all supernatural influence departed from him through too frequent intercourse with the air of the upper world.

Tickler. Come, James, be done with your palavering about ghosts, you brownie, and "gie us anither sang."

Shepherd. Wi' a' my heart. What'll you hae? But beggars shouldna be choosers, sae here it gaes.

SONG.[1]

O weel befa' the maiden gay,
In cottage, bught,[2] or penn;
And weel befa' the bonny May
That wons in yonder glen,
Wha lo'es the modest truth sae weel—
Wha's aye sae kind, an' aye sae leal,
An' pure as blooming asphodel,
Amang sae mony men.
O weel befa' the bonny thing,
That wons in yonder glen.

'Tis sweet to hear the music float
Alang the gloaming lea;
'Tis sweet to hear the blackbird's note
Come pealing frae the tree;
To see the lambkin's lightsome race—
The dappled kid in wanton chase—
The young deer cower in lonely place,
Deep in his flowery den;
But sweeter far the bonny face
That smiles in yonder glen.

O, had it no been for the blush
Of maiden's virgin-flame,
Dear Beauty never had been known,
And never had a name.
But aye sin' that dear thing of blame
Was modell'd by an angel's frame,
The power of Beauty reigns supreme
O'er a' the sons of men;
But deadliest far the sacred flame
Burns in a lonely glen.

There's beauty in the violet's vest—
There's hinny in the haw—
There's dew within the rose's breast,
The sweetest o' them a'.
The sun will rise an' set again,
And lace with burning gowd the main—
And rainbow bend outower the plain,
Sae lovely to the ken;
But lovelier far my bonny thing
That smiles in yonder glen.

[1] By Hogg.

[2] *Bught*—sheepfold.

North. Better and better. I see, James, that Allan Cunningham[1] has included some of your lyrics in his late *Collection of the Songs of Scotland.*

Shepherd. Oh, man! I wush you would lend me the wark. Is't a gude collekshon, d'ye opine?

North. A very good collection, indeed, James. Allan is occasionally very happy in his ardent eulogy of his country's lyrical genius, and one loves to hear a man speaking about a species of poetry in which he has himself excelled.

Shepherd. I'm thinkin you wad scarcely trust me wi' the reviewin o' Allan Kinnigam's wark—for you'll be for doin't yoursel—though I wad do't a hantle better, wi' mair nature and knowledge, too, if wi' fewer fine-spun theories. But you're gettin desperate conçated, and mair especially o' what you execute warst.

North. Come, James, be less severe, and I will sing you one of Allan's songs.

Shepherd. Huts, ye never sung a sang i' your life—at least never that I heard tell o';—but to be sure you're a maist extraordinary cretur, and can do onything you hae a mind to try.

North. My voice is rather cracked and tremulous—but I have sung Scotch airs, James, of old, with Urbani.

MY AIN COUNTREE.

The sun rises bright in France
And fair sets he;
But he has tint[2] the blithe blink he had
In my ain countree.
O! gladness comes to many,
But sorrow comes to me,
As I look o'er the wide ocean
To my ain countree!

O! it's not my ain ruin
That saddens aye my ee,
But the love I left in Galloway,
Wi' bonny bairns three;
My hamely hearth burn'd bonny,
And smiled my fair Marie—
I've left a' my heart behind me
In my ain countree.

[1] Allan Cunningham died in October 1842.

[2] *Tint*—lost.

The bud comes back to summer,
An' the blossom to the bee,
But I win back—oh, never!
To my ain countree!
I'm leal to the high heaven,
Which will be leal to me;
And there I'll meet ye a' soon
Frae my ain countree!

Shepherd. Weel, I never heard the like o' that in a' my days. Deevil tak me gin there be sic a perfectly beautiful singer in a' Scotland. I prefer you to baith Peter Hill and David Wylie,[1] and twa bonnier singers you'll no easier hear in "house or ha' by coal or candle licht." But do you ken, I'm desperate sleepy.

Tickler. Let's off to roost.

North. Stop till I ring for candles.

Shepherd. Cawnels! and sic a moon! It wad be perfect blasphemy—dounricht atheism. But hech, sirs, it's het, an' I'se sleep without the sark the nicht.

North. Without a sark, James! "a mother-naked man!"

Shepherd. I'm a bachelor ye ken, the noo, sae can tak my ain way o't——Gude nicht, sir—gude nicht—We've really been verra pleasant, and our meetin has been maist as agreeable as ane o' the

NOCTES AMBROSIANÆ.

[1] Peter Hill is spoken of in the "Chaldee MS." ch. i., v. 57, as "a sweet singer." David Wylie is one of the circuit clerks of the Court of Session.

IX.

(OCTOBER 1826.)

Mr Tickler's *smaller Dining-room—Southside.*

Shepherd, Mr North, Mr Tickler.

Shepherd. We've just had a perfec denner, Mr Tickler—neither ae dish ower mony, nor ae dish ower few. Twa coorses is aneuch for ony Christian—and as for frute after fude, it's a dounricht abomination, and coagulates on the stamach like sour cruds. I aye like best to devoor frute in the forenoons, in gardens by mysel, daunering[1] at my leisure frae bush to bush, and frae tree to tree, pu'in awa at strawberries, or rasps, or grozets, or cherries, or aipples, or peers, or plooms, or aiblins at young green peas, shawps[2] an' a', or wee juicy neeps, that melt in the mooth o' their ain accord without chewin, like kisses of vegetable maitter.

Tickler. Do you never catch a tartar, James, in the shape o' a wasp, that——

Shepherd. Confound thae deevils incarnate, for they're the curse o' a het simmer. O' a' God's creturs, the wasp is the only ane that's eternally out o' temper. There's nae sic thing as pleasin him. In the gracious sunshine, when a' the bit bonny burdies are singing sae cantily, and stopping for half a minute at a time, noo and than, to set richt wi' their bills a feather that's got rumpled by sport or spray—when the bees are at wark, murmurin in their gauzy flight, although no gauze, indeed, be comparable to the filaments o' their woven wings, or clinging silently to the flowers, sook, sookin out the hinny-dew, till their verra doups dirl wi' delight—

[1] *Daunering*—sauntering. [2] *Shawps*—husks.

when a' the flees that are ephemeral, and weel contented wi' the licht and the heat o' ae single sun, keep dancin in their burnished beauty, up and down, and to and fro, and backwards and forwards, and sideways, in millions upon millions, and yet ane never joistling anither, but a' harmoniously blended together in amity, like imagination's thochts,—why, amid this "general dance and minstrelsy," in comes a shower o' infuriated wasps, red het, as if let out o' a fiery furnace, pickin quarrels wi' their ain shadows—then roun' and roun' the hair o' your head, bizzin against the drum o' your ear, till you think they are in at the ae hole and out at the ither—back again, after makin a circuit, as if they had repentit o' lettin you be unharmed, dashing against the face o' you who are wishin ill to nae leevin thing, and, although you are engaged out to dinner, stickin a lang poishoned stang in just below your ee, that, afore you can rin hame frae the garden, swalls up to a fearsome hicht, making you on that side look like a Blackamoor, and on the opposite white as death, sae intolerable is the agony frae the tail of the yellow imp, that, according to his bulk, is stronger far than the Dragon o' the Desert.

Tickler. I detest the devils most, James, when I get them into my mouth. Before you can spit them out the evil is done—your tongue the size of that of a rein-deer—or your gullet, once wide as the Gut of Gibraltar, clogged up like a canal in the neighbourhood of a railroad.

Shepherd. As for speaking in sic a condition, everybody but yoursel kens it's impossible, and wunner to hear ye tryin't. But you'll no be perswauded, and attempt talking—every motion o' the muscles bein' as bad as a convulsion o' hydrophobia, and the best soun' ye can utter waur than ony bark, something atween a grunt, a growl, and a guller, like the skraich o' a man lyin on his back, and dreamin that he's gaun to be hanged.

Tickler. My dear James, I hope you have had that dream? What a luxury!

Shepherd. There's nae medium in my dreams, sir—heaven or hell's the word. But oh! that hanging! It's the warst job o' a', and gars my very sowl sicken wi' horror for sake o' the puir deevils that's really hanged out and out, *bonâ fide*, wi' a tangible tow, and a hangman that's mair than a mere apparition, a pardoned felon wi' creeshy second-hand corduroy

breeks, and coat short at the cuffs, sae that his thick hairy wrists are visible when he's adjustin the halter, hair red red, yet no sae red as his bleared een, glarin wi' an unaccountable fairceness,—for Lord hae mercy upon us, can man o' woman born, think ye, be fairce on a brither, when handlin his wizen[1] as executioner, and hearin, although he was deaf, the knockin o' his distracted heart that wadna break for a' its meesery, but like a watch stoppin when it gets a fa' on the stanes, in ae minute lies quate, when down wi' a rummle gangs the platform o' the scaffold, and the soul o' the son o' sin and sorrow is instantly in presence of its eternal Judge!

North. Pleasant subject-matter for conversation after dinner, gentlemen. In my opinion, hangin——

Shepherd. Haud your tongue about hangin: It's discussed. Gin you've got onything to say about beheadin, let's hear you—for I've dreamt o' that too, but it was a mere flee-bite to the other mode o' execution. Last time I was beheaded, it was for a great National Conspiracy, found out just when the mine was gaun to explode, and blaw up the King on his throne, the constitution, as it was ca'd, and the kirk. Do ye want to hear about it?

North. Proceed, you rebel.

Shepherd. A' the city sent out its population into ae michty square, and in the midst thereof was a scaffold forty feet high, a' hung wi' black cloth, and open to a' the airts.[2] A block like a great anvil, only made o' wood instead o' airn, was in the centre o' the platform, and there stood the Headsman wi' a mask on, for he was frichtened I wad see his face, sax feet high and some inches, wi' an axe ower his shouther, and his twa naked arms o' a fearsome thickness, a' crawlin wi' sinews, like a yard o' cable to the sheet-anchor o' a man-o'-war. A hairy fur-cap towered aboon his broos, and there were neither shoes nor stockings on his braid splay feet, juist as if he were gaun to dance on the boards. But he never mudged—only I saw his een rollin through the vizor, and they were baith bloodshot. He gied a gruesome cough, or something not unlike a lauch, that made ice o' my bluid; and at that verra minute, hands were laid on me, I kentna by whom or whither, and shears began clipping my hair, and fingers like leeches creeped about my neck, and then without

[1] *Wizen*—the throat.

[2] *Airts*—points of the compass.

ony farther violence, but rather as in the freedom o' my ain wull, my head was lying on the block, and I heard a voice praying, till a drum drowned it and the groans o' the multitude together—and then a hissin that, like the sudden east wind, had muved the verra mournins o' the scaffold.

Tickler. North, put about the bottle. Will you never be cured of that custom of detaining the crystals?

North. I am rather squeamish—a little faintish or so. James, your good health. Now proceed.

Shepherd. Damn their drums, thocht I, they're needless—for had I intended to make a speech, would I not have delivered it afore I laid down my head on the block? As for the hissin, I kent weel aneuch they werena hissin me, but the Man in the mask and the big hairy fur-cap, and the naked feet, wi' the axe in his hands raised up, and then let down again, ance, twice, thrice, measuring the spat on my craig[1] to a nicety, that wi' ae stroke my head might roll over into the bloody sawdust.

Tickler. Mr North, Mr North—my dear sir, are you ill? My God, who could have thocht it!—Hogg, Christopher has fainted!

Shepherd. Let him faint. The executioner was daunted, for the hiss gaed through his heart; and thae horrid arms o' his, wi' a' their knots o' muscle, waxed weak as the willow-wands. The axe fell out o' his hauns, and being sharp, its ain wecht drove it quivering into the block, and close to my ear the verra senseless wud gied a groan. I louped up on to my feet—I cried wi' a loud voice, "Countrymen, I stand here for the sacred cause of Liberty all over the world!"

North (*reopening his eyes*). "The cause of Liberty all over the world!" Who gave that toast? Hush—hush—where am I? What is this? Is that you, James? What, music? Bagpipes? No—no—no—a ringing in my poor old ears. I have been ill, I feel very, very ill. Hark you, Tickler,—hark you—no heeltaps, I suppose—"The cause of Liberty all over the world!"

Shepherd. The shouting was sublime. Then was the time for a speech — Not a drum dared to murmur—With the bandage still ower my een, and the handkerchief in my hand, which I had forgotten to drap, I burst out into such a torrent of indignant eloquence that the Slaves and Tyrants were all

[1] *Craig*—neck.

tongue-tied, lock-jawed, before me; and I knew that my voice would echo to the furthermost regions of the earth, with fear of change perplexing monarchs, and breaking the chains of the shameful bondage by king and priestcraft wound round the Body Politic, that had so long been lying like a heart-stricken lunatic under the eyes of his keepers, but that would now issue forth from the dungeon-gloom into the light of day, and in its sacred frenzy immolate its grey oppressors on the very altar of superstition.

North. What the devil is the meaning of all this, James? Are you spouting a gill of one of Brougham's frothy phials of wrath poured out against the Holy Alliance? Beware of the dregs.

Shepherd. I might have escaped—but I was resolved to cement the cause with my martyred blood. I was not a man to disappoint the people. They had come there to see me die—not James Hogg the Ettrick Shepherd—but Hogg the Liberator; and from my blood, I felt assured, would arise millions of armed men, under whose tread would sink the thrones of ancient dynasties, and whose hands would unfurl to all the winds the standard of Freedom, never again to encircle the staff, till its dreadful rustling had quailed the kings, even as the mountain sough sends down upon their knees whole herds of cattle, ere rattles from summit to summit the exulting music of the thunder-storm.

Tickler. Isn't he a wonderful creature, North? He beats Brougham all to besoms.

Shepherd. So once more, my head was on the block—the axe came down—and I remember nothing more, except that after bouncing several times about the scaffold, it was taken up by that miserable slave of slaves, who muttered, "Behold the head of a traitor!" Not a voice said, Amen—and I had my revenge and my triumph!

North. Strange, so true a Tory should be so revolutionary in his dreams!

Tickler. In France, James would have been Robespierre.

Shepherd. Huts! tuts! Dreams gang by the rule o' contraries. Yet I dinna say what I might hae been during the French Revolution. At times and seasons the nature o' the very brute animals is no to be depended on; and how muckle mair changeable is that o' man, wi' his boasted reason looking

before and after—his imagination building up, and his passions pu'in down; ae day a loving angel frae heaven—the next a demon o' destruction let loose frae hell! But wasna ye there yoursel, Mr North? What for no speak? There's naebody here but freens!

Tickler. Remember, James, that our beloved Christopher fainted a few minutes ago——

Shepherd. Sae he did—sae he did. But it wasna aneath the innate power o' my words. His ain memory armed them with axes and drenched them in bluid. Mony a man can see bluid rinnin like water and no faint, and yet lang after it has sunk into the earth, or heaven's sunshine dried it up among the flowers o' the field, or heaven's rain washed it out o' the street pavement, the silly fule, fancy-struck, will coup ower on his chair wi' a lang dismal sich, at that short single syllable, that does by the lugs[1] what a glass does by the een—that is, recreawtes the sliddery scaffold and a' its headless trunks!

Tickler. Cease your funning, James, and gives us a song.

(SHEPHERD *sings.*)[2]

I lookit east—I lookit west,
I saw the darksome coming even;
The wild bird sought its cosy nest,
The kid was to the hamlet driven;
But house nor hame aneath the heaven,
Except the skeugh of greenwood tree,
To seek a shelter in was given,
To my three little bairns and me.

I had a prayer I couldna pray,
I had a vow I couldna breathe,
For aye they led my words astray,
And aye they were connected baith
Wi' ane wha now was cauld in death.
I lookit round wi' watery ee—
Hope wasna there—but I was laith
To see my little babies dee.

Just as the breeze the aspen stirr'd,
And bore aslant the falling dew,
I thought I heard a bonny bird
Singing amid the air sae blue;

[1] *Lugs*—ears.

[2] Written by Hogg.

It was a lay that did renew
The hope deep sunk in misery ;
It was of one my woes that knew,
And ae kind heart that cared for me.

O, sweet as breaks the rising day,
Or sunbeam through the wavy rain,
Fell on my soul the charming lay !
Was it an angel poured the strain ?
Whoe'er has kenn'd a mother's pain,
Bent o'er the child upon her knee,
O they will bless, and bless again,
The generous heart that cares for me !

A cot was rear'd by Mercy's hand
Amid the dreary wilderness,
It rose as if by magic wand,
A shelter to forlorn distress ;
And weel I ken that Heaven will bless
The heart that issued the decree,
The widow and the fatherless
Can never pray and slighted be.

North. Very touching, James, indeed. You are a tragic poet after Aristotle's own heart—for well you know how to purge the soul by pity and terror.

Shepherd. That I do sir, and by a' sorts o' odd humours too. Snap your thumbs.

Tam Nelson was a queer, queer man,[1]
He had nae ill nor good about him,
He oped his een when day began,
And dozed ower night, ye needna doubt him.

But many a day, and many a night,
I've tried wi' a' the lights o' nature,
To settle what's come o' the wight,
The soulless, senseless, stupid creature !

Tam lo'ed his meltith [2] and his clink [3]
As weel as any in the nation,
He took his pipe, he drank his drink,
But that was nought against salvation.

But were a' the sants and slaves o' sin
Opposed in rank an' raw thegither,
Tam ne'er did aught to cross the ane,
And ne'er did aught to mense[4] the ither.

[1] Written by Hogg.
[2] *Meltith*—victuals.
[3] *Clink*—cash.
[4] *Mense*—conciliate.

Tam graned an dee't like ither men ;
O tell me, tell me, you wha know it,
Will that poor donsy[1] rise again ?—
O sirs, I canna, winna trow it.

Nae doubt, but he wha made us a'
Can the same form an' feelings gie him,
Without a lack, without a flaw—
But what the deil wad he do wi' him ?

He'd make nae scram in cavern vile,
Nor place that ony living kens o',
He's no worth ony devil's while,
Nor upright thing to take amends o'.

If borne aboon the fields o' day,
Where rails o' gowd the valleys border,
He'd aye be standing i' the way,
And pitting a' things out of order.

At psalm, or hymn, or anthem loud,
Tam wadna pass, I sairly doubt it,
He couldna do't—an' if he could
He wadna care a doit about it.

O thou who o'er the land o' peace
Lay'st the cold shroud and moveless fetter,
Let Tam lie still in careless ease,
For d—n him, if he'll e'er be better.

Tickler. What part, James, do ye think Tam Nelson would have played in the French Revolution ?

Shepherd. Ha, ha, ha ! What a curious thocht ! Yet stop a wee—there is nae telling. On great occasions have not Idiots been inspired ? Bonny lassie-bairns, that wud hae shrieked at a taed or a speeder, have they not stood silent and smiling at the stake, fearin neither the faggot and the fire, nor the foamy flood, whether in meek martyrdom they died amidst the prayers o' a crowded street, or left alane by themselves, puir things, on the sands o' the sea ? Sae, wha kens what Tam Nelson micht hae done had he flourished during the French Revolution ?

North. I wish to goodness, my dear James, that you would drop the subject once and for all. I have never changed my political principles.

Shepherd. I ken you never did, ye carle ; and ye could mak

[1] *Donsy*—a stupid, lubberly fellow.

some folk in power the noo hear on the deafest side o' their head, gin you were to ask them where they were some thretty or fourty year sin' syne, in a great city ower the Channel—but——

North. No more politics, my dear James, if you love me.

Shepherd. Weel then, just ae observation mair, and I will indulge ye by speaking a' manner o' havers. In the French Revolution some thousans o' fiends gaed rampauging[1] up and down Paris, lapping blood like butchers' dowgs in a great slaughter-house. Didn't they? Cursing God, singing hymns to the Deevil, and mony o' them condemmin to everlasting death their ain darkened souls. Weel then, in the French Revolution, some thousans o' angels kept praising God in cells and dungeons, walked like creturs in an awfu' but happy dream to the scaffold, and lifted up their een to Heaven—bairns, virgins, wives, widows, young and auld, then alike supplicating pardon and salvation to the souls o' their murderers. Didn't they? Weel then, before the French Revolution brak out, was there ony difference, and if there was, what was't, between the nature o' thae Fiends and thae Angels? They were sisters, brothers, cousins, uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces, and a' manner o' relations by blood and marriage—had been edicatted at the same schools—had said their prayers in the same kirks—assisted at the same baptisms, marriages, and funerals—a' things going on in peace! Till topsy-turvy went the haill structure o' society; and then to be sure the phenomena, which is mair than ever my soul will be able to understaun, and that has aften filled it with troubled thochts when the wind has been roaring at midnight amang the mountains, and things had been happening through the day that had darkened and distracted our ain Shepherd-life,—an elder o' peculiar sanctity seducing a servant lass, a minister fou in the pulpit, a bosom freen for whom ye had been caution rinnin aff to America, and leavin you bankrupt, or, mercy on us! a miller murderin a packman, and the body fund in a sack wi' stanes at the bottom o' the dam! For sma' events — that is, sma' in circumstance and locality — direck the soul that is meditating during the nicht-watches to the greatest that swoop ower the earth — because they a' alike hae their rise in the unfathomable wickedness o' our corrupt and fallen nature; and what signifies it to conscience,

[1] *Rampauging*—raging and storming.

or to the Being who gied us conscience, whether the outward sign be a city wail, or but the sabbing o' ae orphan lassie's heart that has been broken by him who now loves her nae mair!

Tickler. James, we must put you into the General Assembly to squabash the highflyers.[1]

Shepherd. Ye sumph, I'm a hee-fleer mysel — one o' the wild men: o' a' things whatsomever, be it in sacred matters or profane, I detest moderation.

Tickler. I shall write to my friend Lord Radnor, suggesting that since Mr Southey[2] refuses to be a member, he had better elect the Shepherd.

Shepherd. Ye may do so; but mind I make nae promise—gie nae pledge.

North. Tickler, had James stood for Preston, instead of the Old Ruffian,[3] he and Stanley would have been returned.

Shepherd. Me stand for Preston! Na—na—that would be too disgraceful, even for a dream after tough tripe.

North. Yes, my dear James, you would make a useful and appropriate representative of a nest of pastoral burghs—such as Peebles and the rest—(but they have the best of possible Members already.) As for Proud Preston——

Tickler. Proud Preston, indeed—for in that epithet the place rejoiceth—of a surety thy "Pride has had a Fall." How pleasant, during a fortnight of dog-days, James, would it be to stand a contested election for Billingsgate? How delightful to kiss and canvass so many maids, wives, and widows, all redolent of the sea! How thrilling the squeeze of the scaly hand! How rich the perfume of the fishy sigh! Romantic tales of Mermaids in each embrace would be realised—and what pearl ever shone in oyster-shell so beautiful as the drop in those melting and maudling eyes!

North. Then, rising in Parliament, either on some great national question, or to support more especially the interests of your constituents, how encouraging to be saluted from all sides "Hear, hear the Member for Billingsgate!"

[1] The extreme party in the Church of Scotland were called "highflyers."

[2] In 1826 Mr Southey was returned M. P. for the borough of Downton, but declined to take his seat.

[3] The "old ruffian" was William Cobbett. Cobbett was not returned for Preston, but the support which he received was sufficient, in the opinion of the interlocutors, to cover that town with obloquy.

Shepherd. I wad prefer sitting for the Guse-dubs[1] o' Glasgow. O, sirs! What a huddle o' houses, and what a hubbub o'——

North. Gently, James, gently—Your love of alliteration allures you occasionally across the confines of coarseness, and——

Shepherd. If you interrup me, Mr North, I'll no scruple to interrup you, in spite o' a' my respect for your age and endowments. But was ye ever in the Guse-dubs o' Glasgow? Safe us a'! what clarty closses, narrowin awa' and darkenin doun—some stracht, and some serpentine—into green middens o' baith liquid and solid matter, soomin' wi' dead cats and auld shoon, and rags o' petticoats that had been worn till they fell aff and wad wear nae langer; and then ayont the midden, or say, rather surrounding the great central stagnant flood o' fulzie, the wundows o' a coort, for a coort they ca't, some wi' panes o' glass and panes o' paper time about, some wi' what had ance been a hat in this hole, and what had been a pair o' breeks in that hole, and some without lozens a'thegither; and then siccan fierce faces o' lads that had enlisted, and were keeping themselves drunk night and day on the bounty-money, before ordered to join the regiment in the Wast Indies, and die o' the yallow fever! And what fearsome faces o' limmers, like she-demons, dragging them down into debauchery, and hauding them there, as in a vice, when they hae gotten them down,—and, wad ye believe't, swearin and dammin ane anither's een, and then lauchin, and tryin to look lo'esome, and jeerin and leerin like Jezabels.

Tickler. Hear! hear! hear!

Shepherd. Dive down anither close, and you hear a man murderin his wife, up-stairs in a garret. A' at ance flees open the door at the stair-head, and the mutchless mawsey, a' dreepin wi' bluid, flings herself frae the tap step o' the flicht to the causeway, and into the nearest change-house, roaring in rage and terror—twa emotions that are no canny when they chance to forgather—and ca'in for a constable to tak haud o' her gudeman, who has threatened to ding out her brains wi' a hammer, or cut her throat wi' a razor.

North. What painting, Tickler! What a Salvator is our Shepherd!

Shepherd. Down anither close, and a battle o' dowgs! A

[1] A low locality in Glasgow.

bull-dowg and a mastiff! The great big brown mastiff mouthin the bull-dowg by the verra hainches, as if to crunch his back, and the wee white bull-dowg never seemin to fash his thoomb, but stickin by the regular set teeth o' his under-hung jaw to the throat o' the mastiff, close to the jugular, and no to be drawn aff the grip by twa strong baker-boys pu'in at the tail o' the tane, and twa strong butcher-boys pu'in at the tail o' the tither—for the mastiff's maister begins to fear that the veeper at his throat will kill him outright, and offers to pay a' betts and confess his dowg has lost the battle. But the crood wush to see the fecht out—and harl the dowgs that are noo worryin ither without ony growlin—baith silent, except a sort o' snortin through the nostrils, and a kind o' guller in their gullets—I say, the crood harl them out o' the midden, ontil the stanes again—and "Weel dune, Cæsar."—"Better dune, Veeper."—"A mutchkin to a gill on whitey."—"The muckle ane canna fecht."—"See how the wee bick is worryin him now, by a new spat on the thrapple."—"He wud rin awa gin she wad let him loose."—"She's just like her mither that belanged to the caravan o' wild beasts."—"Oh man, Davie, but I wud like to get a breed out o' her, by the watch-dowg at Bell-meadow bleachfield, that killed, ye ken, the Kilmarnock carrier's Help in twunty minutes, at Kingswell"——

North. I never heard you speak in such kind before, James——

Shepherd. I'm describing the character o' my constituents, you ken, and should be eloquent, for you wull recollec that I sat out wi' imagining mysel Member o' Parliament, that is representative o' the Guse-dubs. But, as Horace says,

"Est modus in rebus, sunt certi denique fines."

I crave a bumper. Faith claret's no that strong, so I'll drink the toast this time in a tummler, "Baith sides o' the Tweed!" Hip—hip—hip—hurraw! After a,' I maun confess that I like the Englishers, if they wadna be sae pernicketty[1] about what they eat.

North. Minds like ours, my dear James, must always be above national prejudices, and in all companies it gives me true pleasure to declare, that, as a people, the English are very little indeed inferior to the Scotch.

[1] *Pernicketty*—particular.

Shepherd. I canna gang sae far as that, Mr North. Indeed, I've often observed that when ye praise an individual or a nation, you are apt to transcend a' bounds o' panegyric, juist out o' the natural goodness o' your heart, that gets the better of the greatness of your understanding. To put an end to the argument a'thegither, you see, or rather to prevent it frae getting a beginning, let me simply ask, Where wull you find in a' England siccan Poets o' the People, the Peasantry, that is, the Children o' the Soil, the Bairns o' Bank and Brae, as Robert Burns, Allan Kinningham, and Me?

North. Why, James, there is Bloomfield.

Shepherd. O man, Mr North, sometimes after you've ta'en a drap, you do really, indeed, my dear sir—believe me when I say't—speak maist awfu' nonsense! Burns and Bloomfield indeed!

North. Why, James, there's Clare.

Shepherd. I howp, sir, you'll no think me ower impertinent, gin I juist ask how auld you are? You see the drift o' my question, so I'll no press't. But really, sir, you should be cautious—for at your time o' life——Kinningham and Clare indeed!

North. Then, James—there is—then, James, there is—Let me remember—why, James, there is—there is—

Shepherd. Aha! my man, ye were in howps o' findin a parallel likewise to me? But familiar as you are with the haill range o' original poetry, and deeply as you feel, and weel's you understand it, you were out o' your reckoning there, my lad—when you thocht to selec some southern swain to shouther the Shepherd out o' the first rank o' genius—or even to staun by his side! Havena ye, my dear sir—just confess?

Tickler. What think you of Stephen Duck?[1]

Shepherd. That he was a duck—that ye are a guse—and that I am a swan. Ha, ha, ha! that's no a bad pun, Mr Tickler, though I made it mysel. It is at least extempore, and no like some o' your ain apothegems, a month auld at the newest.

North. Hogg, did you recollect old Parr?[2]

Shepherd. How could I recollec him? I never lived in the reign of Charles the Second; at least if I did, I do not

[1] A forgotten poetaster, who died in 1756.

[2] There were two "old Parrs," Pill-Parr and Wig-Parr. Pill-Parr was born in 1483, and died, it is said, at the age of one hundred and fifty-two years and nine months. Wig-Parr born in 1751, died in 1825.

immediately recollec it—but, can it be true, do you think, that he ever was so muckle as twa hundred year auld? I can scarcely credit it. I ken an auld woman in Ettrick wha's a hundred and fifty by the parish register; but at that time o' life fifty years makes a great difference, and the period of Parr's age maun be apocryphal.

Tickler. There has been another Parr, James, since Charles the Second's time—the Man with the Wig.

Shepherd. Pity me! my memory's no what it ance was—the Doctor o' Deveenity Parr, wi' the frock and frizzle, that eat so many muirfowl in our Tent?[1] I thocht him geyan stupid; but he took a likin to me, which was sae far in his favour, and therefore I howp he's weel, and no dead yet?

North. The Doctor is dead, James.

Shepherd. Weel, then, you can bring him forward noo as ane of the great English scholars, to shame a' the Scotch anes at Embro', St Andrews, Glasgow, and Aberdeen. Do ye recollec my shooting his wig for a ptarmigan?

North. I shall never forget it, James, nor any other incident in the excursion.

Shepherd. That's mair than I'll answer for. I howp there's mony an incident in the "Excursion" that I hae forgotten, for I cannot say that I recollec ony incident at all in the haill poem, but the Pedlar refusing to tak a tumbler o' gin and water with the Solitary. That did mak a deep impression on my memory, for I thocht it a most rude and heartless thing to decline drinking with a gentleman in his ain house; but I hope it was not true, and that the whole is a malignant invention of Mr Wordsworth.

North. James, you are a satirical dog—a wolf in sheep's clothing. But to return to old Parr;—just as you do, my dear Shepherd, I have a kindness for all that ever set foot within our Tent—even Tims.[2]

Tickler. Come, North, no nonsense. You can never name Tims and Parr in the same sentence.

Shepherd. And what for no? I recollec perfectly weel thinkin Dr Parr the maist learned o' the twa, mair especially in Greek and Latin; but Tims appeared to me in the licht o' a man o' greater natural abeelities. It was wi' the greatest diffeeculty that I got the Priest to comprehend the tithe o' what I said, whereas the Pawnbroker was a bit clever aneuch

[1] See *Blackwood's Magazine* for Aug. 1819. [2] See *ante*, p. 32, note 2.

ape o' a body, and after hearin me crack twa-three times, although I shallna ventur to say that he guessed my meanin, yet you would hae been surprised to hear how he got haud o' the words, and the verra sound of my idiomatic accent—so that had you steekit your een, you micht hae thocht, when the cretur was speakin, that he was Jamie Hogg; but, to be sure, on opening them again, you would hae gotten an unco fricht to see that it wasna me but only Tims, afore he took up his French title of Wictoire. And I'm tell't that he can do the same thing, within the short length of his tether, wi' the bit pen o' him, in regaird to ither folks' printed style, and has putten forth some byuckies that, a' things considered, are not by any means so very muckle amiss.

North. Have you seen Parr's Aphorisms, Tickler?

Tickler. Parr's Aphorisms, North? No—I have not seen Parr's Aphorisms, North: nor have you—nor will you, nor I, nor any other mortal man, ever see Parr's Aphorisms, North; for this simple reason, that Parr was no more able to utter an aphorism, North, than an old tom-cat to coin a gold guinea, Mr North.

Shepherd. Is an aphorism onything at a' like an apopthegem?

Tickler. As two peas.

Shepherd. Then I agree with you, Mr Tickler, that Dr Parr never conçaved—never was delivered of—and never brought up an aphorism in his born days; and that the productions bearing it's name will be found to hae nane o' it's nature; for the seeds o' an aphorism—at least if it be, Mr North, as Mr Tickler manteens, sib[1] to an apopthegem—never were in him; and he was by nature incapacitated frae bringing forth onything mair valuable than an *ipse dixit*, or a dogma.

Tickler. The Aphorisms of Parr! Next we shall have Pastorals by Day and Martin, and Epithalamia by Jack Ketch. The author of the *Pursuits of Literature* never said a truer thing than when he called Parr the Birmingham Doctor—not an imitator, observe, but a mere counterfeit; having the same relation to the true thing, Samuel Johnson, whom he aped, as the thunder of Drury Lane, which no doubt sounds magnificently to the ears of Colburn's theatrical critics in the pit, to that of Jove in the heavens, νεφεληγερετα Ζευς, with which he awes the hearts of nations.

[1] *Sib*—akin.

North. As an original thinker, I own he was Nemo—nobody; but as a scholar——

Tickler. Hum—hummior—hummissimus,—he was a mere Parolles in a Pedagogue's wig. His preface to Bellendenus, as all the world knows, was never looked into but for its oddities; first, that it talked about Fox, and Burke, and Lord North, in Latin—when others talked of them in English; secondly, that this Latin, as he called it, was a monster of deformity, being in fact a cento made up from every Roman on God's earth, beginning with Fabius Pictor, and the "Stercus Ennii," down to the "rank Africanisms" (to use Milton's phrase) of Arnobius. An English History could not be more extravagant, composed out of the hoary archaisms of Robert of Glocester, compounded with the "three-piled" Gibbonisms of Sharon Turner. "He had been at a great feast of languages, and had stolen the scraps."

North. I cannot help admiring his Spital sermon, as——

Tickler. Beyond all comparison the most empty bladder-dash that ever attempted to soar without gas into the ethereal regions.

North. His Dissertation on the word Sublime at the end of Dugald Stewart's Philosophical Essays?

Tickler. Ay, a sublime treatise on Mud, with some superior remarks on the preposition Sub. The whole amount from a world of pother, parade, and pseudo-learning, is, that Sublime means, not that which is under the mud, but that which is above it; *sub* coming not from ὑπο but from ὑπερ. Small structure as all this would have been, had it stood on a true foundation, Professor Dunbar has, I perceive, in an able paper in the last Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, smashed it with an iron hand, and the paltry pile has disappeared.

Shepherd. I would like, Mr Tickler—if it were not usin ower much liberty—to ask leave to ring the bell for some toasted cheese? It's a gude while now sin' dinner, and I'm getting roun' again into hunger.

Tickler. Surely, James, surely—you shall have a ton of toasted cheese.

North. My friend Paris, a clever and charming fellow, has lately published a work on Diet,[1] in which I am equally

[1] *A Treatise on Diet and Regimen.* By John Ayrton Paris, M.D. London. 1826.

surprised and sorry to see laid down the most pernicious and penurious principles. Few fellows play a better knife and fork than Paris; yet, in theory, he supports the starvation system, which, in practice, he does from the very bottom of his stomach condemn.

Shepherd. O, man, there's something very auld-wifish-like in publishing a book to tell folk how to devour their vittles. There's nae mystery in that matter—hunger and thirst are simple straughtforward instincts, no likely to be muckle improved by artificial erudition; and I'll bet you a cheese to a kibbock[1] (by the by, what for is't no coming ben,[2] the bit Welch rabbit) that your frien's wark on diet will hae nae perceptible influence on the character o' the Table during our age.

Tickler. The Son of Priam talks away like a Trojan, as he is, about the dangerous tendency of indulgence in a multiplicity of dishes.

Shepherd. He's richt there. Nae healthy man has ony use for mair than half-a-dizzen dishes at dinner,—soup, fish, flesh, fowl, tairts, and cheese, is aneuch for ony reasonable——

Tickler. Hush, Heliogobalus—and hear Paris. "The stomach being distended with soup, the digestion of which, from the very nature of the operations which are necessary for its completion, would in itself be a sufficient labour for that organ, is next tempted with fish, rendered indigestible from its sauces; then with flesh and fowl; the vegetable world, as an intelligent reviewer has observed, is ransacked from the *Cryptogamia* upwards."

North. What a precious ninny the said intelligent reviewer!

Tickler. "And to this miscellaneous aggregate are added the pernicious pasticcios of the pastry-cook, and the complex combinations of the confectioner. All these evils, and many more, have those who move in the ordinary society of the present day to contend with."

Shepherd. Hech, sirs!—Hech, sirs!—Ha—ha—ha! Forgie me for bursting out a-lauchin at a clever man, and a frien' o' yours, gentlemen; but, oh dear me, my sides, heard ye e'er the like o' that last sentence! It would be a grand warld, sirs, if man had nae mair evils to contend against than soups, and fish, and flesh, and fowl. As to the whole vegetable

[1] *Kibbock*—cheese made of skimmed milk.

[2] *Ben*—to the inner chamber. In a Scottish cottage the outer room is called *But*, and the inner *Ben*.

warld, frae Cryptogamia upwards, I shall say naething anent that clause in our calamities, never having been at Cryptogamia, which, for anything I ken to the contrary, may be the neist kintra to Mesopotamia; neither shall I venture to contradic the Doctor about the pastigeos—unless, indeed, he mean pigeon-pies, in which case I gie him the lee direct in the maist unequivocal and categorical manner, they being the maist hailsome o' a' bird-pies whatsomever, whether common doecots or cushats—only you maunna eat them ower often, for——

Tickler. But the Doctor continues: "Nine persons in ten eat as much soup and fish as would amply suffice for a meal."

Shepherd. A lee! a lee!—amply suffice for a meal!

Tickler. "A new stimulus appears in the form of stewed beef, côtelettes à la suprême; then comes a Bayonne or Westphalia ham, or a pickled tongue, or some analogous salted, but proportionably indigestible dish, and each of these enough for a single meal."

Shepherd. He forgets, he forgets, the Doctor forgets, Mr Paris, M.D. forgets that each man in the company cannot for his own individual share eat up the whole of the same individual dish. Each man only takes a platefu', or twa at the maist, o' each o' thae dishes; for whaever heard o' being helped three times to ilka dish on the board? Nae man would hae the face to ask it; and if he did, the prayer o' his petition would not be granted.

Tickler. "But this is not all; game follows; and to this again succeed the sweets, and a quantity of cheese."

Shepherd. Quite right—quite right. O, Mr Tickler, what an effect, after sic a dinner, would Dr Paris produce on a guest by an emetic!

Tickler. "The whole is crowned with a variety of flatulent fruits and indigestible nick-nacks, included under the name of dessert, in which we must not forget to notice a mountain of sponge-cake."

Shepherd. And then what a cracking o' nitts, till a pyramid of shells rises up before each member of the club. But there I agree with the Doctor.

Tickler. "Thus then it is, that the stomach is made to receive, not one full meal, but a succession of meals, rapidly following each other, and vying in their miscellaneous and pernicious nature with the ingredients of Macbeth's cauldron."

Shepherd. There again Dr Paris speaks great nonsense, for Shakespeare meant no affront to a good denner—and too many great folk quote and allude to him with ignorance and presumption. Macbeth's cauldron, indeed! Had the Doctor been right, wha wadna be a witch or a warlock? But the truth is, he has written down the starvation system by the mere simple statement of that of generous repletion. I wish it were now about a quarter of an hour or ten minutes before denner, instead of twa hours after it; but I will try and put off till supper; and meanwhile here goes a sort o' nonsensical sang:—

There's some souls 'll yammer and cheep [1]
If a win'le-strae lie in their way;
And some through this bright world 'ill creep,
As if fear'd for the light o' God's day.

And some would not lend ye a boddle,
Although they would borrow a crown;
And some folk 'ill ne'er fash their noddle
Wha's waukin, if they can sleep soun'.

And some wi' big scars on their face,
Point out a prin scart on a frien';
And some black as sweeps wi' disgrace,
Cry out the whole world's unclean.

Some wha on the best o't can cram,
Think a'body else maun be fu';
Some wouldna gie misery a dram,
Though they swattle themsels till they spew.

Sure's death! there can be but sma' pleasure
In livin 'mang sic a cursed crew,
An't werena the soul's sacred treasure,
The friendship that's found in a few.

That treasure, let's hoord it thegither,
Enjoy my gude luck or thole ill,
Nor grudge though wine's sent to a brither
In hoggits, when I've but a gill.

Then here's to the chiel wha's sae bauld
As to trust his ain thought to his tongue,
Wha e'en, though his trunk's growin auld,
Has a soul and a heart that are young.

[1] Written by Hogg.

Before I an auld frien' forget,
My memory first I maun tine ;—
Here's a glass for anither health yet,
Need'st thou guess, angel woman!—it's thine.

North. Thanks—a queer, bold, independent, soul-speaking thing——

Shepherd. Mercy on us! what a deevil o' a noise! heard ye ever the like o' that?

Tickler. A cat-concert, James. The Toms and Tabbies have overheard your song, and are striking up in return an imitation of the Hunter's Chorus in the "Freischutz."

Shepherd. I've often thocht it aneuch to sicken ane o' love a' their days, just to reflec that all that hissing and spitting, and snuffing and squeaking, and squealing and howling, and growling and groaning, a' mixed up into ae infernal gallemaufry o' din, unlike onything else even in this noisy world, was, wi' these gentle domestic creatures, the saftest, sweetest expression o' the same tender passion that from Adam's lips whispered persuasion into Eve's ear in the bowers of Paradise! But it's no possible to thole this ony langer—out wi' the musket, Mr Tickler, and let drive at them —and when a's silent again, I'll gie ye anither sang.

Tickler. Take advantage of that pause, James, and begin.

Shepherd. Up wi' the fiddle, then, and let's hae an accompaniment o' baith vocal and instrumental music.

North. Stop, James! Your mine is inexhaustible. But did you ever hear Irish Johnstone sing—my dear crony of the olden time, Jack Johnstone? Here goes an attempt at his style of chaunt.

THE HUMOURS OF DONNYBROOK FAIR.[1]

AIR—"*The Athlone Landlady.*"

Oh! 'twas Dermot O'Rowland M'Figg
That could properly handle the twig!
He went to the fair,
And kick'd up a dust there,
In dancing the Donnybrook jig,
With his twig—
Oh my blessing is Dermot M'Figg!

[1] Written by Crofton Croker.

When he came to the midst of the fair,
He was all in a *paugh* for fresh air,
For the fair very soon
Was as full as the moon,
Such mobs upon mobs as were there,
Oh rare!
So more luck to sweet Donnybrook fair!

The souls they came pouring in fast,
To dance while the leather would last,
For the Thomas Street brogue,
Was there in much vogue,
And oft with the brogue the joke pass'd,
Quite fast,
While the cash and the whisky did last!

But Dermot, his mind on love bent,
In search of his sweetheart he went,
Peep'd in here, peep'd in there,
As he walk'd through the fair,
And took a small taste in each tent
As he went,
Och! on whisky and love he was bent.

When, who should he spy in a jig,
With a meal-man, so tall and so big,
But his own darling Kate,
So gay and so neat—
Faith, her partner he hit him a dig,
The pig,
He beat the meal out of his wig.

The piper, to keep him in tune,
Struck up a gay lilt very soon,
Until an arch wag
Cut a hole in his bag,
And at once put an end to the tune
Too soon—
Och! the music flew up to the moon!

To the fiddler, says Dermot M'Figg,
If you please, sir, play "Sheelah na Gig,"
We'll shake a loose toe,
While you humour the bow;
To be sure, you won't warm the wig
Of M'Figg,
While he's dancing a tight Irish jig.

But, says Katty, the darling, says she,
If you'll only just listen to me,
It's myself that will show
Billy can't be your foe,
Though he fought for his cousin, that's me,
Says she;
For sure Billy's related to me!

For my own cousin-german, Ann Wild.
Stood for Biddy Mulrooney's first child,
And Biddy's step-son,
Sure he married Bess Dunn,
Who was gossip to Jenny, as mild
A child
As ever at mother's breast smiled!

And maybe you don't know Jane Brown,
Who served goats' whey in Dundrum's sweet town.
'Twas her uncle's half brother
That married my mother,
And brought me this new yellow gown,
To go down,
When the marriage was held at Miltown.

By the powers! then, says Dermot, 'tis plain,
Like a son of that rapscallion Cain,
My best friend I have kilt,
Though no blood there is spilt,
And the devil a harm did I mane,
That's plain;
But by me he'll be ne'er kilt again!

Then the meal-man forgave him the blow
That laid him a sprawling so low,
And, being quite gay,
Asked them both to the play,
But Katty being bashful, said "No,
Oh No—No!"
Yet he treated them all to the show.

Shepherd. The like o' that was never heard in this warld afore. The brogue as perfec as if you had been born and bred in the bog o' Allen! How muckle better this kind o' weel-timed daffin that aye gangs on here at Southside, than literary and philosophical conversation, and criticism on the fine arts, and polemical discussion wi' red faces and fiery een

on international policy, and the corn laws, and surplus population, and havers about free Tread! Was ye in the shower-bath the day, Mr Tickler?

Tickler. Yes, James—do you take it?

Shepherd. I hae never yet had courage to pu' the string. In I gang and shut the door on mysel—and tak haud o' the string very gently, for the least rug 'ill bring down the squash like the Falls of the Clyde; and I look up to the machine, a' pierced wi' so many water-holes, and then I shut my een and my mouth like grim death, and then I let gae the string, and, gruin a' the time, try to whistle; and then I agree to allow myself a respite till I count fifty; and neist begin to argue wi' my ain conscience, that the promise I had made to mysel to whumle the splash-cask was only between it and me, and that the warld will ken naething about the matter if I come out again *re infectâ;* and, feenally, I step out as cautiously as a thief frae a closet, and set myself down in the arm-chair, beside the towel warming at the fire, and tak up the Magazine, and peruse, perhaps, ane o' the "Noctes Ambrosianæ," till I'm like to split wi' lauchin at my ain wut, forgettin a' the time that the door's no locked, and what a figure I wud present to ony o' the servant-lasses that micht happen to come in lookin for naething, or to some collegian or contributor, come out frae Embro' during the vacance to see the Ettrick Shepherd. But I canna help thinkin, Mr Tickler, for a' your lauchin, that in a like predicament you would be a mair ridiculous mortal than mysel—But what are ye thinking on, Mr North? I dinna believe ye hae heard a word o' what I've been saying,—but it's your ain loss.

North. You were speaking of the Greek loan?

Shepherd. I was, sir. Yon's a bonny business![1]

[1] The details respecting the Greek loan and its gross mismanagement are to be found in the *Annual Register* for 1826, p. 370-376. The following extract is amusing, as showing that, just as charity begins at home, so the exertions of a great reformer, straining every nerve in behalf of an oppressed people, may end in nothing, except tightening the strings of his own purse, at the expense of those whom he is befriending. The facility of the administrators of the fund in yielding to Joseph Hume's claim is even more astounding than his audacity in advancing it. "In the first loan Mr Hume had assigned to him £10,000 stock, at the rate of £59 per hundred, the original price at which the contract was made. Some time afterwards, the bonds having fallen to 16 per cent discount, Mr Hume became alarmed, and applied to the deputies and contractors to relieve him from his loss. The deputies at first refused,—intimating that, if the

North. Master Ricardo is the most disinterested of patriots. Sixty-four thousand pounds of commission is a mere nothing to a man of his wealth, and could not in the least have influenced his zeal in the cause of Greece. Indeed, the whole management of the concern has been admirable. With what despatch the war steam-boats were built, engined, equipped, manned, officered, and sent to sea! What greatness of soul in Galloway[1] to sacrifice the feelings of a father, and succour the sacred cause of Liberty against the machinations of his own son! How glorious to behold America sending forth her vapouring vessels at the puny price of some hundred and fifty thousand pounds, to carry the invincible Cochrane against the prows of the Egyptian Pasha! At home and abroad alike, among the friends of Freedom, what honour, what honesty, what valour, what devotedness! How many martyrdoms, on flood and field, on corse-covered lagoon and bloody battlement, in presence of the spirits of those who died at Platæa and Marathon, while high above them all stands the Apparition of Leonidas, undeformed by wounds, and with his radiant tresses wreathed with flowers, as on the night before the sacrifice of Thermopylæ, offered to his country's Gods!

Tickler. "The old man eloquent!"

Shepherd. It gars me a' grue, like Rule Britannie frae a band o' regimental music o' the Seventh Hussars, now at

stock had risen, Mr Hume would not have parted with the profit. He, however, insisted on his demand: he was powerful, for he had a control over the proceeds of the loan; and at length the deputies consented to take the stock off his hand at the rate of 13 *per cent* discount. Thus Mr Hume lost only £1300 instead of £1600; *and the loss of the £300 was gratuitously thrown upon Greece!* Some time afterwards Greek stock rose above par, and Mr Hume made strenuous and persevering applications to have the £1300 *returned to him!!* The request excited considerable surprise; but, from an unwillingness to disoblige so ardent and faithful a friend to the Greek cause, this sum *was also given to him!!!* Still Mr Hume was not satisfied. He discovered that the interest on the £1300, from the date when the contractors took his stock from him, at 13 per cent discount, to the date when they made him a present of the £1300, would amount to £54. *He accordingly applied also for this sum of £54, and received it!!!!*"—*Annual Register*, 1826, p. 376.

[1] No part of the mismanagement connected with the Greek loan was more disgraceful than the delay and embezzlement which took place in equipping the war-steamers which had been contracted for to aid in the liberation of Greece. Galloway, the engineer to whom the construction of the machinery had been committed, had a son in the service of the Pasha of Egypt as an engineer. Hence the ironical allusion in the text: while the father abetted the Greeks, the son stood by the Turks.

Jock's Lodge.[1] I canna read Greek—except in a Latin translation done into English—the case, I suspect, wi' mony a ane that passes for a sort o' scholar; but I ken pieces, fragments o' their glorious history, Pope's Homer, West's Pindar, and stray strains o' Plato a Poet in prose; I have heard as in an echo the thunder o' Demosthenes, have seen casts o' marble statues of their gods and demigods, and godlike men, and oh! fairer far and mair divinely beautiful even than the loveliest lady that ever reined her palfrey through Ettrick Forest of old, or lowly lassie sitting by herself in her plaid on the brae, moulds of those who were worshipped on earth because of their exceeding brightness, and that in Heaven were paramours of the Deities, and shone from the night-firmament, stationary, or a-flight, o'er a hundred generations now all buried in the dust. Therefore, curses be on the turbans of the Turks, and may Diana sit again between the horns of her own crescent, as it rises radiant ower Mount Latmos and——

North. Sit nearer me, James. I am a little deafish on the one side of my head next my dear Shepherd, and am unwilling that a word should be lost.

Shepherd. I haena the least conception noo o' what I was speakin about; but somehow or ither I was thinkin o' the soun' o' a trumpet. Damn the Turks!

North. By the by, here are some verses I got to-day from a young friend, as yet but little known to the world, yet of whose genius and talents I have high hopes. The lines I think are full of spirit, although I have lying by me compositions of his, both in prose and verse, that are perhaps——

Shepherd. Noo, Mr North, dinna let your voice fa' at the ends o' lines, and read as if you were reading before James Ballantyne.

THE SONG OF THE JANISSARY.[2]

Have they trod down the mighty?—By sea and by shore,
Will our name be a watchword and terror no more?
Has the eagle been hurl'd from his throne in the air?
Will the fox find a home in the grim lion's lair?

[1] Jock's Lodge, a cavalry barrack near Edinburgh.

[2] The janissaries (the old Turkish soldiery, who had become utterly worthless and corrupt) were destroyed by Sultan Mahmoud II. in 1826, after a bloody struggle.

Have they trod down the mighty? The victors who stood
Resistless when life was pour'd forth like a flood!—
The awarders of empire! the mates of the brave!—
The freemen who hallow'd the land of the slave!

Our name is a scorn, and our sabres are rust,
Our palace a sepulchre gory in dust,—
But again shall its turrets gleam high in the air,
And again shall the flash of our sabres be there!

Again shall the name of our Aga be known—
A spell that o'ershadows the mosque and the throne;
Again shall our foeman grow pale when he hears
The tread and the shout of the fierce Janiziers!

For a time—for a time may the tyrant prevail,
But himself and his Pashas before us shall quail;
The fate that tore Selim in blood from the throne,
We have sworn, haughty Mahmoud! shall yet be thy own.

The warriors of ages! who fought and who bled
With Osman and Amurath—the deathless though dead,—
Are they destined to pass like the sunshine of spring?—
Their fame to the winds, and their neck to the string!

By the Prophet! the waves of the Euxine shall stop,
The stars from the concave like hailstones shall drop,
Ere the traitor and coward may hope to tread down
The tameless in soul—the undimm'd in renown.

We warn thee, stern Mahmoud! thy hour is at hand.—
Thou hast sharpen'd the lance, thou has kindled the brand;
We are gathering like tempests that gather by night,
Woe—woe to thee, King! when we burst in our might!

Shepherd. Mony a clever lad ye ken, Mr North. But sometimes I think that, like ither auld men, ye pretend to do things you're nae capable o'—and you receeted thae verses as if they were your ain. Are they?

North. No.

Shepherd. That's aneuch.

North. Here's a copy of fine verses, James, by the same author, but every line seems written twice over—how is that?

Shepherd. I never could tell how that happens—but miss every ither line, and a' will be right.

Tickler. I have observed that, at night, after supper, with ships at sea. Two ships of the line! not one ship and one frigate—but two eighty-fours. Shut one eye, and there at

anchor lies, let us say, the Bellerophon—for I am speaking of the olden time. Open the other, and behold two Bellerophons riding at anchor. Optics, as a science, are all very well; but they can't explain that mystery—not they and be hanged to them—ask Whewell or Airy. But, North, the verses!

Shepherd. There's nae mair certainty in mathematical science than in sheep-shearing. The verses!

Tickler. The stanzas seem to me to be sixteen lines each, but I will divide them by two, which gives eight verses.

North. Well, well, James, if you think the Magazine's not falling off——

Shepherd. Mr Tickler, man, I canna stay ony langer—ye see Mr North's gotten unco fou, and I maun accompany him in the cotch down to Buchanan Lodge—Shall I?

North. Hogg, as to that, if you don't care about the calculation; for as to the Apocrypha, and so on, if the Bible Society pay four hundred a-year, really the *Christian Instructor*—hip—hip—hip!—Why, Hogg, ye see—the fools are—hurra—hurra—hurra!—

Shepherd. O, Mr Tickler, North's gotten a mouthfu' o' fresh air when you opened the window, and is as fou's the Baltic. But I'll see him hame. The cotch, the cotch, the cotch,—dinna dint the pint o' your crutch into my instep, Mr North—there, there, steady, steady—the cotch, the cotch. Gude mornin, Tickler—what a moon and stars!

Tickler. Let him take a sleep, James; you and he have both had your jokes and jibes, and songs and stories, and I have had no opportunity of showing off the whole night. Let me take that slip of paper gently out of his hand, and pass off the contents for my own. It is the least unprincipled of all kinds of plagiarism to rob a sleeping friend. To steal from the dead is sacrilege. Listen!

TO LUCY.

The silver tones of woman's tongue,
  The eloquence of woman's eyes,
A thousand nameless bards have sung,
  The strains unheeded by the wise.
I would not be a bard like them
  Even for the heaven of Lucy's smile.
And Lucy would herself condemn
  The flatterer's deceitful wile.

I could not tell thee how I love,
Nor paint the charms I find in thee,
Though every leaf in yonder grove
Changed into winged words for me;
But, Lucy! to this heart of mine
Let me thy gentle fingers press,—
Each rapid bounding throb is thine,
And every throb is happiness.

Lucy! it is the holy hour
When sunlight dies upon the sea—
When pearls are hung on every flower,
And birds are hush'd on every tree.
Open the lattice—all is mute,
Mute as the beams of yon pale star;
I would not even have thy lute
The music of such silence mar.

Methinks there is in it a spell
That gives the soul a higher sway,
And thoughts that oft in darkness dwell,
Start into life in bright array:
Thoughts—feelings—ecstasies—that fling
A sudden joy through both our bosoms,
Like flowers in moonlight, or like spring
That wreaths on every bough her blossoms.

Each other's world we long have been,
Our eyes their sun—or arms their zone,
But now a something felt—not seen—
Gives to our bliss a higher tone;
While we can clasp each other thus,
In love's deep purity entwined.
Oh! what is all this earth to us?—
Earth cannot bound the chainless mind!

Our souls, like clouds at break of day,
Across the sun's bright pathway driven,
Have into light resolved away—
O God! the light—the light of Heaven!
My spirit floats in liquid light,
Like skiff upon a sapphire sea.
O Lucy! we have seen to-night
A glimpse of Heaven's eternity!

Lucy! it is a time for prayer—
A time for thoughts we cannot speak,
But in the blue and starry air
Our thoughts will find the home they seek.
Kneel with me Lucy, side by side,—
We are not things of dust and clay,
Thou art my own immortal bride,—
Kneel with me, dearest!—we will pray.

Shepherd. Thae verses are nae small beer, Tickler. You're a bad reader, but they read themselves—sae fu' o' pathos and poetry. Here's the health o' the chiel that wrote them.

North (*awakes sober*). Have you read the "Hints for the Holidays,"[1] James? and how do you like them?

Shepherd. I enterteen ower muckle envy and jealousy o' that awthor, fairly to judge or fully to enjoy ony o' his warks. He does the same o' me—so we're on a fittin[2] o' equality.

Tickler. In short, there's no love lost between you.

Shepherd. I hope not — for I love him as weel as ony freen I hae—and sae I verily believe does he me. But, oh! that leeterary envy and jealousy to which we are baith a prey. It embitters the very heart's-bluid.

North. I never felt such passions.

Shepherd. Because, ye see, Mr North, ye staun ower high aboon a' ither editors. Wi' a weel-pleased face, you keep lookin down on them — and where's the merit in your seeing them, without envy or jealousy, plouterin in the dubs,[3] or brastlin up the braes, or sittin down pechin[4] on "Rest and be thankfu'."[5] But mind that to you they're a' lookin up—that "they sigh the more because they sigh in vain," yet glad glad would they be if they could rug ye doun frae your throne by the tail o' the coat, or drag the crutch out o' your nieve, or even mislay your specs, that they might dim your perspicacity! I hae often heard ither editors, and their contributors, wondering how auld ye really were, some o' them moving ye up as heigh as fourscore! They try, but it winna do, to believe it possible that ye may have some constitutional tendency to apoplexy, and swear, against the testimony o' their

[1] Contributed to *Blackwood's Magazine,* Nos. CXIV., CXVI., CXVII., by Professor Wilson.

[2] *Fittin*—footing.

[3] *Plouterin in the dubs*—floundering in the puddles.

[4] *Pechin*—panting.

[5] A seat on the summit of the ascent in Glencroe—a wild Highland pass—is so called.

ain senses, that you're unco short in the neck. There's no a better complaint to bring against a man than cholera morbus, and wi' that, sir, they have charged ye several times, even to the length o' death. In the Great Fire o' Edinburgh, a far greater ane than the Great Fire o' London, in proportion to the size o' the twa touns, and that's a' a Scotchman need contend for, it was rumoured that ye had perished under a fall o' fiery rafters. That sough[1] I traced mysel back to the Seven Young Men;[2] and, nae doubt, mony mony howped ye had been in the Comet.

North. It is not in my power to bring myself to believe that I can be hated by any human being, James. It is not, indeed.

Shepherd. Hated—by some you're just perfectly abhorred! your name's just anither name for Sawtan; and the sanctum sanctorum, in their imagination, what ither place but, to be plain wi' ye, preceesely hell?

North. That is very discouraging to——

Shepherd. Discouragin! What! to be hated, abhorred, feared by the bad and the base, the paltry and the profligate, the sinfu', and, what's sometimes waur than sinfu', the stupit? What for didna baith o' you twa come up to the moors on the Twalf this season?

Tickler. We were at Dalnacardoch, you ignoramus, also at Dalwhinnie, along Loch Ericht, over from Dall to Megarney, at the head of Glen-Lyon, thence across the Moor o' Rannoch to the head o' Glenorchy; then pluff—pluff—rap—rap—slab—bang in the direction of Inverary—away round by Cairndow—from that ower some grand shooting-ground to the Cobler[3] sitting in the Clouds above Arrochar and Loch Long—and finally, skirting the coast over against Greenock, a steamer took us to Glasgow, where the rums were looking up, the punch was pleasant, and the people given to geggery, every house hospitable, and a set of first-rate fellows flourishing at The Club.

Shepherd. It wasna fair no to let me ken.

Tickler. The truth is, James, that North was in rather an odd way, and did not like to be looked at by anybody but me——

[1] *Sough*—rumour.

[2] The contributors to *Constable's Magazine* were so characterised by *Blackwood.*

[3] A lofty mountain in Argyllshire is so called, from the appearance it presents of a cobbler bending over his last.

Shepherd. Didna like to be looked at by ony ither body but you! He maun hae been in an odd way indeed.—Was ye rather a wee wrang in the head, sir? If sae, I can sympathecze wi' you, for I was geyan ill mysel in that way about the time that I was writing the "Pilgrims o' the Sun."

Tickler. Not then, James. It was when you were engaged in writing Memoirs of your own Life.

Shepherd. Cheer up, Mr North, cheer up! Oh, my dear sir, whenever the Magazine wants a gran' article, only ask me, and ye shall hae't. I hate to see ye sae down i' the mouth.

North. Nobody can understand my feelings, James. I am an unhappy man. The Magazine is getting every month stupider and stupider. I think—that is, Ebony thinks of reducing the price to two shillings, and augmenting the sheets to twelve. Rousseau in his *Confessions* — and the Opium-Eater——

Shepherd. Cheer up, Mr North, cheer up. You hae nae occasion for Rousseau, and he's ower far aff to send articles without a sair expense—and naebody kens where he is; and as for the Opium-Eater, he lives in a world o' his ain, where there are nae Magazines o' ony sort, but o' hail and sleet, and thunder, and lichtnin, and pyramids, and Babylonian terraces covering wi' their fallen gardens, that are now naething but roots and trunks o' trees, and bricks o' pleasure-houses, the unknown tombs o' them that belonged ance to the Beasts in the Revelations, and were ordered to disappear by a hand on a wall, shadow and substance baith emblems—(is that the word?)—o' the thousan years transitory greatness of the michty—ignorant, that at the verra best they were the ghosts of ghosts, shadows of dreams, and tenth-cousins to the dust, frailer and mair evanescent than their dry relation wha is himsel disowned by that proud landed proprietor—Earth!

North. Surely Ambrose has made some alteration in his house lately. I cannot make out this room at all. It is not the Blue Parlour?

Shepherd. We're at Southside, sir—we're at Southside, sir—perfectly sober ane and a'; but dinna be alarmed, sir, if you see twa cotches at the door, for we're no gaun to separate—there's only ane, believe me—and I'll tak a hurl wi' ye as far's the Harrow.

X.

(NOVEMBER 1826.)

Scene,—Ambrose's Hotel, Picardy Place—Paper Parlour.

SHEPHERD, NORTH, *and* TICKLER.

Shepherd. Do you ken, Mr North, that I'm beginning to like this snug wee roomy in Mr Awmrose's New Hotel, maist as weel's the Blue Parlour in the dear auld tenement?

North. Ah no, my dear James, none of us will ever be able to bring our hearts to do that; to us, Gabriel's Road will aye be holy and haunted ground. George Cooper[1] is a fine fighter and a civil landlord, but I cannot look on his name on that door without a pensive sigh! Mr Ambrose's worthy brother has moved, you know, up stairs, and I hobble in upon him once a fortnight for auld langsyne.

Shepherd. I aften wauken greetin'[2] frae a dream about that dear dear tenement. "But what's the use o' sighing, since life is on the wing;" and but for the sacredness o' a' thae recollections, this house—this hotel—is in itsel preferable, perhaps, to our ancient howf.

North. Picardy is a pleasant place, and our host is prosperous. No house can be quieter and more noiseless.

Shepherd. That's a great maitter. You'll recollect me ance lodgin in Anne Street,[3] noo nae langer in existence,—a steep street, ye ken, rinnin down alang the North Brig towards where the New Markets are, but noo biggit up wi' a' thae new buildings——

[1] George Cooper, a respectable man, although a pugilist, succeeded Ambrose in Gabriel's Road.

[2] *Greetin*—weeping.

[3] The Scottish Central Railway terminus is close to the site where Anne Street formerly stood.

North. That I do, James. 'Twas there, up a spiral stone staircase, in a room looking towards the Castle, that first I saw my Shepherd's honest face, and first I ate along with him cod's head and shoulders.

Shepherd. We made a nicht o't wi' twa dear freens[1];—ane o' them at this hour in Ettrick, and the ither ower the saut seas in India, an Episcopalian chaplain.

North. But let's be merry, James. Our remembrances are getting too tender.

Shepherd. What I was gaun to say was this,—that yon room, quate[2] as it seemed, was aften the maist infernally noisy chawmer on the face o' this noisy earth. It wasna far, ye ken, frae the playhouse. Ae wunter there was an afterpiece ca'd the Burnin o' Moscow, that was performed maist every nicht. A while afore twal the Kremlin used to be blawn up; and the soun', like thunder, wauken'd a' the sleepin dowgs in that part o' the town. A' at ance there was set up siccan a barkin, and yellin, and youlin, and growlin, and nyaffin, and snaffin, and clankin o' chains frae them in kennels, that it was waur than the din o' aerial jowlers pursuing the wild huntsmen through the sky. Then cam the rattlin o' wheels, after Moscow was reduced to ashes, that made the dowgs, especially the watch anes, mair outrageous than ever, and they keepit rampaugin in their chains on till past twa in the mornin. About that hour, or sometimes suner, they had wauken'd a' the cocks in the neebourhood—baith them in preevate families and in poulterers' cavies; and the creturs keepit crawin defiance to ane anither quite on to dawn o' licht. Some butchers had ggem-cocks in pens no far frae my lodgings; and oh! but the deevils incarnate had hoarse, fierce, cruel craws! Neist began the dust and dung carts; and whare the mail-coaches were gaun, or comin frae, I never kent, but ilka half-hour there was a toutin o' horns—lang tin anes, I'm sure, frae the scutter o' broken-winded soun'. After that a' was din and distraction, for day-life begude[3] to roar again; and aften

[1] Mr Grieve of Cacra Bank, Ettrick, an Edinburgh merchant; and Mr James Gray, one of the masters of the High School. The latter was an accomplished linguist. After leaving the High School, he held an appointment in Belfast College, and died in India, in the service of the Church of England, while engaged in translating the Scriptures into one of the native dialects.

[2] *Quate*—quiet. [3] *Begude*—began.

hae I risen without ever having bowed an ee, and a' owing to the burnin o' Moscow, and blawin up o' the Kremlin.

North. Nothing of the sort can happen here. This must be a sleeping house fit for a Sardanapalus.

Shepherd. I'll try it this verra nicht.—But what for tauk o' bedtime sae sune after denner? It's really a bit bonny parlour.

North. What think you, James, of that pattern of a paper on the wall?

Shepherd. I was sae busily employed eatin durin denner, and sae muckle mair busier drinkin after denner, that, wull ye believe me when I say't, that gran' huntin-piece paperin the wa's never ance caught my een till this blessed moment? Oh sirs, but it's an inspeeritin picture, and I wush I was but on horseback, following the hounds!

Tickler. The poor stag! how his agonies accumulate, and intensify in each successive stage of his doom, flying in distraction, like Orestes before the Furies!

Shepherd. The stag! confoun' me gin I see ony stag. But yon's a lovely leddy—a Duchess—a Princess—or a Queen—wha keeps aye crownin the career, look whare you wull—there soomin[1] a ford like a Naïad—there plungin a Bird o' Paradise into the forest's gloom—and there, lo! reappearing star-bright on the mountain brow!

North. Few ladies look loveable on horseback. The bumping on their seat is not elegant; nor do they mend the matter much when, by means of the crutch, they rise on the saddle like a postilion, buckskin breeches excepted.

Tickler. The habit is masculine, and, if made by a country tailor, to ordinary apprehension converts a plain woman into a pretty man.

North. No modest female should ever sport beaver. It gives her the bold air of a kept-mistress.

Tickler. But what think you of her elbows, hard at work as those of little Tommy Lye, the Yorkshire Jockey, beginning to make play on a north-country horse in the Doncaster St Leger, when opposite the Grand Stand?

North. How engagingly delicate the virgin splattering along, whip in mouth, draggle-tailed, and with left leg bared to the knee-pan!

Shepherd. Tauk awa—tauk awa—ye twa auld revilers;

[1] *Soomin*—swimming.

but let me hae anither glower o' my galloping goddess, gleaming gracefully through a green glade, in a' the glorious grimness of a grove of gigantic forest-trees!

Tickler. What a glutter o' gutturals!

Shepherd. O that some moss-hidden stump, like a snake in the grass, wud but gar her steed stumble, that she might saftly glide outower the neck before the solitary shepherd in a flichter o' rainbow light, sae that I were by to come jookin out frae ahint an aik, like a Satyr, or rather the god Pan, and ere her lovely limbs cou'd in their disarray be veiled among the dim wood violets, receive into my arms and bosom—O blessed burthen!—the peerless Forest Queen!

North. Oh gentle Shepherd!—thou fond idolater!—how canst thou thus in fancy burn with fruitless fires before the image of that beautiful cruelty, all athirst and a-wing for blood?

Shepherd. The love that starts up at the touch o' imagination, sir, is o' mony million moods.—A beautiful Cruelty! Thank you, Mr North, for the poetic epithet.

North. Such SHAPES, in the gloom of forests, hunt for the souls of men!

Shepherd. Wood-witch, or Dell-deevil, my soul would follow such a Shape into the shades o' death. Let the Beautiful Cruelty wear murder on her face, so that something in her fierce eyeballs lure me to a boundless love. I see that her name is Sin; and those figures in the rear, with black veils, are Remorse and Repentance. They beckon me back into the obscure wi' lean uplifted hands, and a bony shudder, as if each cadaver were a clanking skeleton; but the closer I come to Sin, the farther awa and less distinct do they become; and, as I touch the hem o' her garment, where are they gone?

North. James, you must have been studying the German Romances. But I see your aim—there is a fine moral——

Tickler. Curse all German Romances.—(*Rings the bell violently.*)

Shepherd. Ay, Mr Tickler, just sae. You've brak the bell-rope, ye see, wi' that outrageous jerk. What are ye wantin?

Tickler. A spitting-box.

Shepherd. Hoots! You're no serious in sayin you're gaun to smoke already? Wait till after sooper.

Tickler. No, no, James. I rang for our dear Christopher's cushion. I saw, by the sudden twist that screwed up his chin, that his toe twinged.—Is the pain any milder now, sir?

Shepherd. Oh, sir! oh, sir! say that the pain's milder noo, sir!—Oh, dear me! only to think o' your listenin to my stupid havers, and never betrayin the least uneasiness, or wish to interrupt me, and gaur me haud my tongue!—Oh, sir! oh, sir! say that the pain's milder noo, sir!

North. Wipe my brow, James—and let me have a glass of cold water.

Shepherd. I'll wipe your broo. Pity me—pity me—a' drappin wi' cauld sweat! But ye maunna tak a single mouthfu' o' cauld water. My dearest sir—its poishin for the gout—try a soup o' my toddy. There! grasp the tummler wi' baith your hauns. Aff wi't—it's no strang.—Arena ye better noo, sir? Isna the pain milder noo?

North. Such filial tenderness, my dear boy, is not lost on ——oh! gemini—that was the devil's own twinge!

Shepherd. What's to be dune? What's to be dune? Pity me, what's to be dune?

North. A single small glass, James, of the unchristened creature, my dear James.

Shepherd. Ay, ay—that's like your usual sense. Here it's — open your mouth, and I'll administer the draught wi' my ain hauns.

Tickler. See how it runs down his gizzern, his gizzern, his gizzern, see how it runs down his gizzern—ye ho! ye ho! ye ho![1]

North. Bless you, James—it is very reviving—continue to converse—you and Tickler—and let me wrestle a little in silence with the tormentor.

Shepherd. Wha wrote yon article in the Magazine on Captain Cleeas and Jymnastics?[2]

Tickler. Jymnastics! — James,—if you love me — G hard. The other is the Cockney pronunciation.

Shepherd. Weel, then, GGGhhymnastics! Wull that do?

Tickler. I wrote the article.

Shepherd. That's a damned lee. It was naebody else but Mr North himsel. But what for didna he describe some o' the fates[3] o' the laddies at the Edinburgh Military Academy,

[1] This is the fag-end of some old Bacchanalian ditty.

[2] See *ante*, p. 33, note 2.

[3] *Fates*—feats.

on the Saturday afore their vacanse? I never saw the match o' yon!

Tickler. What tricks did the imps perform?

Shepherd. They werena tricks — they were fates. First, ane after anither took haud o' a transverse bar o' wud aboon their heads, and raised their chins ower't by the power o' their arms, wi' a' the ease and elegance in the warld. Every muscle, frae wrist to elbow, was seen doin its wark, aneath the arms o' their flannel-jackets. Then ane after anither mounted like so many squirrels up to anither transverse bar—(transverse means cross.)

Tickler. Thank ye, James,—you are a glossarial Index.

Shepherd. Eh? What?—and leanin ower't on their breasts, and then catching haud, by some unaccountable cantrip, o' the waistband o' their breeks, awa they set heels ower head, whirligig, whirligig, whirligig, wi' a smoke-jack velocity, that was perfectly confoundin, the laddie doin't being nae mair distinguishable in lith and limb, than gin he had been a bunch o' claes hung up to frichten craws in the fields, within what's ca'd a wund-mill.

Tickler. I know the exercise—and have often done it in my own back-green.

Shepherd. Ha, ha, ha, ha! What maun the neebors hae thought the first time they saw't, lookin out o 'their wundows; or the second aither? Ha, ha, ha, ha! What a subject for a picture by Geordie Cruickshanks—Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

Tickler. Your laugh, Hogg, is coarse—it is offensive.

Shepherd. Ha, ha, ha, ha! My lauch may be coorse, Tickler, for there's naething superfine about me; but to nae man o' common sense can it, on sic an occasion, be offensive. Ha, ha, ha, ha! Oh dear me! Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! Lang Timothy whurlin round a cross-bar, up in the air amang the rowan-tree[1] taps, in his ain back-green at Southside!!! Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! I wush I mayna choke mysel.

Tickler. Sir, you are now a fit object of pity—not of anger or indignation.

Shepherd. I'm glad o' that, for I hate to see ye angry, sir. It gars ye look sae unco ugly — perfectly fearsome. Weel,

[1] This rowan tree, or mountain ash, still flourishes in the back-green of No. 20 George Square, formerly occupied by Mr Robert Sym.

then, after the whirlin, then first ae laddie, and then anither, took a grup o' a lang rope hinging down to the grund frae a bar thretty feet heech;[1] and then, haun o'er head, up they swung, like sae mony prime seamen in a storm; and in a jiffey were seen sittin aloft, arms a-kimbo, and legs across, the same thing as on chairs — a' the crood ruffin the exploit, and the maisters o' the Academy walkin weel-pleased about underneath, as they weel micht be, wi' the proficiency o' their poopils. In a minute the active creatures caught haud first o' ae rape, and then o' anither; for some dizzen rapes were danglin doun frae the bar; and wad ye believe, they crossed in that mainner the haill breadth o' the court, just as if they were on the riggin o' a ship?

North. It must indeed have been a pretty sight, James.

Shepherd. Oh, Mr North! is that your vice? I am glad to see you've come roun'. Then began the loupin and ither ggghymnastics; and never saw I sic a set o' Robin-good-fellows, bouncin ower hichts as heech as my nose.

North. Was there no danger, James, in all these exploits?

Shepherd. None whatsomever. Captain Cleeas tells us in his byuck, that among thousans o' boys performin their evolutions every day for years, not a single serious accident has ever occurred—and now I believe't. It was curious to see the verra mithers o' the callants, and their bits o' bonny sisters, and aiblins sweethearts, a' sittin on benches as in the playhouse, viewin them gaun tapsalteerie in the lift, without a shiver or a shriek.

North. I understand the system has been brought into play at Heriot's Hospital — (now under excellent management, thanks to Mr Bookseller Blackwood, Mr Surgeon Wood, Dr Brunton, and others for that)—and next year it is to be introduced into the New Academy. I hope the High School will follow the example—for what other recreation at once so joyous and so useful? The credit of establishing the system in Scotland will then be due to that excellent nobleman and soldier, Lord Robert Kerr, and my worthy friend Sir Patrick Walker, whose zeal and knowledge in everything they have done about the Military Academy, is above all praise.

Shepherd. It's an æra in edication — and I howp Captain

[1] *Heech*—high.

Cleeas 'll come to Scotland some day. We'll gie him a gran' denner at Awmrose's; and to Mr Voelkner too, wha's a capital Ggghymnast, likewise, they say, and a model o' a man for muscularity and banieness, without an unce o' superfluous flesh, and balanced in a' his powers, to verra perfection. Major Downes,[1] I'm sure, 'll accept an inveetation, and we'll be a' glad to do honour to sic a clever and accomplished offisher; nor maun we forget honest Serjeant Lawson, wha has proved himsel a worthy disciple o' Cleeas, and dune wonders wi' his poopils in sae short a time. We'll a' get fou thegither, and we'll hae a rape frae the ceilin for a game at Ggghymnastics afore oysters. Mr Tickler's back-green practice will gie him a great advantage.

Tickler. Ah! Jamie, Jamie — nae mair o' your satire-shafts, for like elf-shots they're no canny.

Shepherd. Gie's your haun. Ay, that's a hearty squeeze. Nane o' thae cauldrife forefinger touches for me, that fine folk are sae fond o'. I like a grasp that gars the nails grow red, for then the bluid gangs back wi' birr again in circulation to the heart.

Tickler. Your right hand, my dear Shepherd, is like a vice, in friendship or in love.

Shepherd. I'm out o' breath. Ane o' you tak up the thread o' the discoorse, or rather spin a new yarn. Mr North, sir, gie's ane o' your gran' speeches. I want to fa' asleep.

North. Yes, Edina, thou art indeed a noble city, a metropolis worthy the Land of Mountain and of Flood, Glen, Forest, Loch, and long-winding arms of Ocean! Queen of the North! which of thy august shrines dost thou love the best—the Castle-Cliff, within whose hoary battlements Kings were born —the Green Hill looking down on deserted Holyrood—the Craigs smitten into grandeur and beauty by time and the elements—or the Mountain, like a lion couchant, reposing in the sky?[2]

Shepherd. Losh me! that's beautifu' language.

North. The glorious works of Nature everywhere overshadow those of man's hands, and her primeval spirit yet reigns, with paramount and prevailing power, over the region that art has

[1] At this time Major Downes was the superintendent of the Military Academy which had been recently instituted in Edinburgh.

[2] Arthur Seat and Salisbury Crags.

made magnificent with spires and obelisks, towers, temples, and palaces!

Shepherd. Nane o' your astmatic coughs—on wi' ye—on wi' ye—ye deevil.

North. Wheel round the city as on eagle's wing, skimming the edge of the smoke, and the din, and the tumult, in itself a world, yet bordered how beautifully by another world of plains, woods, and ranges of hills, and that glorious Firth—all silent, serene, sublime—and overhead a heaven swept into cloudless azure by the sea-blasts, and stretching out an ample circumference for the path of the sun!

Shepherd. Eh? Was ye speakin to me? Ou ay, it's a gude jug.

North. Eastward—those are ships hanging afar off between wave and weathergleam;—westward—those are not clouds, but snow-capt mountains, whose sides are thundering with cataracts, and round whose bases lie a hundred lakes.

Shepherd. Whoo—ah—uch—awe!

North. The eye needs not, here, the aid of Imagination: but Imagination will not, in such a scene, suffer the eye to be without her aid. The past and the future she makes to darken or brighten on the present—the limits of the horizon she extends afar—and round "stately Edinborough, throned on craggs," arises a vision of old Scotland from sea to sea!

Shepherd (*starting*). Lord, sirs, I thocht I had coupit ower a precipice just then.

North. Thou hast been a great traveller, Tickler. Say, then, if ever thou didst behold a more splendid Panorama? Conjure up in competition the visions of great Capitals—for there is room enough in the mind's domain for them all—for all the metropolitan cities whose hum is heard in the centre of continents, by the flowing of rivers, or along the sounding seashore. Speak thou—and I shall be silent. Let those stone buildings fall into insignificance before mansions of marble—those domes sink to the dust beneath the height of Oriental cupolas—those puny squares disappear beside palace-bounded plains, on which a people might congregate—and those streets shrink up like a scroll, as fancy sees interminable glens of edifices, from which the music from the van of a mighty army would be emerging as the rear was entering the gate.

Shepherd. Did ye say ye heard the bawn?[1] Are the sodgers

[1] *Bawn*—band.

gaun by? If sae, I maun hae a look out o' the wundow. Hoots, ye gouk, it's only the watchmen crawing the hour to ane anither like sae mony midden-cocks. Dinna be angry gin I lay down my head on the table—for it's a lang ride, sirs, frae Mount Benger, and the beast I hae the noo's an awfu' hard trotter, and his canter's a wearifu' wallop. Do ye think Mr Awmrose could gie me the lend o' a nicht-cap?

Tickler. Why, James, I have heard you talk in your sleep better than any other man awake, half-an-acre-broad. The best ghost story I ever shuddered at, you delivered one Christmas midnight, to the accompaniment of one of your very finest snores.

Shepherd. Wauken me, Mr Tickler, when Mr North's dune. Whew—hoo—whew—hoo—whew—hoo—ho, ho—ho, ho—ho, ho—hro—hro—hro—hro—hro—hro!

Tickler. Had I never heard the Shepherd in his sleep before, North, I could have sworn from that snore that he played the fiddle. What harmony? Not a note out of tune.

North. Why he is absolutely snoring the "Flowers of the Forest." A Jew's harp's a joke to it. Heavens! Tickler, what it is to be a man of genius!

Shepherd. A man o' genius! Did ye never ken afore that I was a man o' genius? But I really feel it's no gude manners to fa' asleep in sic company; so I'll do a' I can to struggle against it. Gang on wi' your bonny description, sir. Just suppose yoursel speakin to some stranger or ither frae England, come to see Embro'—and astonish the weak native.

North. Stranger! wilt thou take us for thy guide, and ere sunset has bathed Benledi in fast-fading gold, thou shalt have the history of many an ancient edifice—tradition after tradition, delightful or disastrous—unforgotten tales of tears and blood, wept and shed of old by kings and princes and nobles of the land?

Shepherd. O man, but that's bonny, bonny! Ye hae mair genius nor me yoursel.

North. Or threading our way through the gloom of lanes and alleys, shall we touch your soul with trivial fond records of humbler life, its lowliest joys and obscurest griefs? for oh! among the multitudes of families all huddled together in that dark bewilderment of human dwellings, what mournful know-

ledge have we from youth to age gathered, in our small experience, of the passions of the human heart!

Shepherd. Dinna fa' into ony imitation o' that flowery writer[1] o' the *Lichts and Shadows.* I canna thole that.

North. Following that palsy-stricken crone to her lonely hearth, from her doom we could read a homily on the perishing nature of all this world's blessings—friendship, love, beauty, virtue, and domestic peace! What a history is written on that haggard face, so fair and yet so miserable! How profound a moral in that hollow voice! Look in at that dusty and cobwebbed window, and lo! a family of orphans, the eldest, not fifteen years, rocking an infant's cradle to a melancholy song! Stoop your head below that gloomy porch, and within sits a widow beside her maniac daughter, working day and night to support a being, in her malignant fierceness still tenderly beloved! Next door lives a woman whose husband perished in shipwreck, and her only son on the scaffold! And hark to an old grey-headed man blithely humming at his stall, who a month ago buried his bedridden spouse, and has survived all his children, unless, indeed, the two sons, of whom he has heard no tidings for twenty years, be yet alive in foreign lands.

Shepherd. O man! what for dinna ye write byucks? There ye hae just sketched out subjects for Tales in Three Volumms.

North. It is long, James, since Poetry became a drug, and Prose is now in the same predicament.

Shepherd. Ye never said a truer word in a' your life. Some o' thae late Lunnun stories garred me scunner. There's Treman, that Lockhart or some ither clever chield praises in the *Quarterly*—and there's Mawtildy, and there's Graunby, and there's Brambleberry-hoose, and there's the Death Fetch,[2] and Carry, and some dizzen ithers, whase teetles I hae forgotten—no worth, a' o' them pitten thegither, ony ae volumm of my *Winter Evenings' Tales*, that nae reviewer but yoursel, Mr North (and here's to ye in a bumper), ever either abused or panegaireezed—because, forsooth, they are not "Novels of Fashionable Life."

[1] "That flowery writer" was Professor Wilson himself.

[2] *Tremaine*, by Ward; *Matilda*, by Lord Normanby; *Granby*, by Lister; *Brambletye House*, by Horace Smith; the *Death Fetch*, by Banim.

Tickler. Tremaine is a sad ninny. Only imagine to yourself the *beau ideal* of a Freethinker, who is unable to give any kind of answer, good, bad, or indifferent, to the most commonplace arguments urged against his deistical creed. The moment he opens his mouth, he is posed by that pedantic old prig, Dr Evelyn, and his still more pedantic daughter, on subjects which he is represented as having studied professedly for years. There he stands gaping like a stuck pig, and is changed into a Christian by the very arguments with which he must have been familiar all his life, and which, in the writings of the most powerful divines, he had, it seems, continued utterly to despise. Such conversion proves him to have been an idiot—or a knave.

North. The third volume is indeed most despicable trash. But you are wrong, Tickler and James, about the Doctor and his daughter, as they show themselves in the first two volumes. There we have really a pleasing picture of a fine, old, worthy, big-wigged, orthodox, and gentlemanly divine of the Church of England, and of a sweet, sensible, modest, elegant, and well-educated, lovely young English gentlewoman. Had it been my good fortune, James, to fall in with Miss Evelyn at the rectory, I would have bet a board of oysters to a rizzard haddock, that I should have carried her off to Gretna Green, without any preliminary exposition of my religious principles, and, within the fortnight, convinced her of my being an orthodox member of her own church.

Shepherd. O siccan vanity—siccan vanity! and it's me that you're aye lauchin at for haeing sic a gude opinion o' mysel. I never thocht I could hae married Miss Evelin, though I've aye been rather a favourite amang the lassies—that's sure aneuch.

North. Imitators—imitators are the Cockneys all. They can originate nothing. And in their paltry periodicals, how sneakingly they blaspheme that genius, from whose sacred urn they draw the light that discovers their own nakedness and their own impotence!

Tickler. Title-pages, chapter-mottoes even—stolen, transmogrified, and denied!

North. What a cadger crew, for example, are the Cockney chivalry! At a tournament, you think you see the champion of some distressed damsel holding fast by the pummel, that he may not be unhorsed, before the impugner of his lady's

chastity does, from losing his stirrups, of himself fall with a thud, James, on the ground.

Shepherd. And then what a way o' haudin the lance! As for the swurd, they keep ruggin[1] awa by the hilt, as if they were pu'in[2] up a stane wi' a soocker; but up it wunna come, rug as they wull, ony mair than if it were glued or clesped on wi' a muckle twusted preen.[3] They're ackart[4] as the Soor-milks.[5]

North. Who the devil are they, James?

Shepherd. No ken the Soor-milks? The Yeomanry, to be sure, wi' the hairy-heel'd, long-chafted naigs, loosen'd frae pleuch and harrow, and instead o' a halter round their noses, made to chow a snaffle, and free frae collar and breeching, to hobble their hurdies at a haun-gallop, under the restraint o' a martingirl, and twa ticht-drawn girths, aneuch to squeeze all the breath out o' their lean-ribbed bodies. That's the Soor-milks.

Tickler. Then, the store of ladies, "whose bright eyes rain influence and dispense the prize," are such nymphs as may be seen in the slips of Drury Lane or Covent Garden Theatre, having flocked in, at half-price, with fans, parasols, reticules, plaid-shawls, and here and there a second-hand ostrich feather.

Shepherd. Scotland has produced some bad aneuch writers —but the verra waurst o' them hae aye a character o' originality. For if ony ane of our authors hae mannerism—it's at least mannerism o' his ain. The difference atween us and them, is just the difference atween a man and a monkey.

North. What think ye, James, of this plan of supplying Edinburgh with living fish?

Shepherd. Gude or bad, it sall never hae my countenance. I couldna thole Embro' without the fishwives, and gin it succeeded, it would be the ruin o' that ancient race.

Tickler. Yes, James, there are handsome women among these Nereids.

Shepherd. Weel-faured hizzies, Mr Tickler. But nane o' your winks—for wi' a' their fearsome tauk, they're decent

[1] *Ruggin*—pulling.
[2] *Pu'in*—pulling.
[3] *Preen*—pin.
[4] *Ackart*—awkward.
[5] At the time of the Radical riots in 1819 and 1820, the Edinburgh rabble gave the name of *Sour-milks* to the county yeomanry, intimating thereby that the milk with which they supplied the market was generally sour.

bodies. I like to see their well-shaped shanks aneath their short yellow petticoats. There's something heartsome in the creak o' their creeshy creels on their braid backs, as they gang swinging up the stey[1] streets without sweetin, with the leather belt atower their mutched heads, a' bent laigh doun against five stane load o' haddocks, skates, cods, and flounders, like horses that never reest[2]—and, oh man, but mony o' them hae musical voices, and their cries afar aff make my heart-strings dirl.

North. Hard-working, contented, cheerful creatures, indeed, James, but unconscionable extortioners, and——

Shepherd. Saw ye them ever marchin hamewards at nicht, in a baun of some fifty or threescore, down Leith Walk, wi' the grand gas-lamps illuminating their scaly creels, all shining like silver? And heard ye them ever singing their strange sea-sangs—first half-a-dizzen o' the bit young anes, wi' as saft vices and sweet as you could hear in St George's Kirk on Sabbath, half singin and half shoutin a leadin verse, and then a' the mithers and granmithers, and ablins great-granmithers, some o' them wi' vices like verra men, gran' tenors and awfu' basses, joinin in the chorus, that gaed echoing roun' Arthur's Seat, and awa ower the tap o' the Martello Tower, out at sea ayont the end o' Leith Pier? Wad ye believe me, that the music micht be ca'd a hymn—at times sae wild and sae mournfu'—and then takin a sudden turn into a sort o' queer and outlandish glee? It gars me think o' the saut sea-faem—and white mew-wings wavering in the blast—and boaties dancin up and down the billow vales, wi' oar or sail,—and waes me—waes me—o' the puir fishing-smack, gaun down head foremost into the deep, and the sighin and the sabbin o' widows, and the wailin o' fatherless weans!

Tickler. But, James, I saw it asserted in a printed circular that there had never been a perfectly fresh fish exposed to sale in Edinburgh since it was a city.

Shepherd. That's been in what they ca' a prospectus. A prospectus is aye a desperate pack o' lees, whether it be o' a new Magazine or Cyclopedy, or a Joint-Stock Company, o' ony ither kind whatsomever.—A' fish stinkin!—War the cod's head and shouthers, and thae haddies, and flukes, and oyster-sass, that Mr Awmrose gied us this blessed day, a' stinkin?

[1] *Stey*—steep. [2] *Reest*—grow restive.

Wad Mr Denovan[1] or ony other man hae daured to say sae, and luckit me or you in the face when we were swallowing the fresh flakes that keepit fa'in aff the braid o' the cod's shouthers as big as crown-pieces, and had to be helpit wi' a spune instead a' that feckless fish-knife, that's no worth a button, although it be made o' silver?

Tickler. Why, I must say that I approve Mr Denovan's enterprise and public spirit. A few days ago I saw a cargo of live fish, not one of which had been caught on this side of Cape Wrath.

North. So do I, James. No fear of the fishwives.—But has any of you seen Murray's list? He has lately published, and is about to publish, some excellent works.

Tickler. I see announced, "Letters of General Wolfe."

Shepherd. Is that fack? Oh, man, that wull indeed be an interesting and valuable work;[2] which is mair than can be truly said of all the volumes sae yclepd by the Duke of Albemarle, in his gran', pompous, boastin adverteesements.

North. Every Englishman, to use the noble language of Cowper, must be proud

> "That Chatham's language is his mother-tongue,
> And Wolfe's great name compatriot with his own."

But, alas! as Wordsworth finely says,

> "So fades, so languishes, grows dim, and dies,
> All that this world is proud of;"—

and the glory even of the conqueror of Quebec has sunk into a kind of uncertain oblivion. These letters will revive its lustre. Wolfe was a man of genius and virtue as well as valour; and it will be a rousing thing to hear, speaking as from the tomb, him who so gloriously fought and fell, and in his fall upheld, against France, the character of England,—a service worth a thousand Canadas.

Shepherd. Then there's Tam Moore's "Life o' Byron." That'll be a byuck that'll spread like wildfire.

North. That is to be a book of Longman's.[3]

[1] The projector of the new plan for supplying Edinburgh with fish, alluded to in the text.

[2] This work, announced by John Murray of Albemarle Street, was never published.

[3] Murray eventually was the publisher of Moore's *Life of Byron.*

Shepherd. I'm glad to hear that; for Longman's hoose is a gran' firm, and has stooden, amang a' the billows o' bankruptcy, like a rock. They aye behaved generously to me; and I wush they would gie me a trifle o' five hundred pounds for a rural romance, in three volumes.

North. Mr Moore's "Life of Lord Byron" will be a most interesting one. With all its too many faults, his "Biography of Sheridan" has gone rapidly through several large editions. But his "Byron," we prophecy, will be far better than his "Sheridan." Of that character there is no mistaking either the glory or the gloom; and as no one doubts or denies Mr Moore's feeling, fancy, and genius, how can he fail in the biography of his illustrious and immortal friend?

Tickler. I wish Oliver and Boyd would give us Allan Cunningham's *Paul Jones.* What are they about?

North. The publishing season has scarcely set in. That, too, will be an excellent thing, for Allan is full of the fire of genius.

Tickler. Hogg, what do you say?

Shepherd. Whan he praises me, I'll praise him; but no till than.

North. No bad rule either, James. *Torr Hill* too, Horace Smith's novel or romance, will be well worth reading, if it be at all equal to *Brambletye House;* for he is a manners-painting author, and brings character and incidents together in a very interesting style.

Shepherd. What's the *Odd Volume* that a' the newspapers is praisin sae?

North. A very lively and amusing volume it is, James; and the joint production, as I have heard it whispered, of two young ladies, sisters,[1]——

Shepherd. And no married?

North. Time enough, James. You are old enough to be their father.

Shepherd. Whan wull a' the Christmas-present volumes, wi' the bonny cuts, be out,—the *Souvenir*, and the *Amulet*, and the *Friendship's Offering*, and the *Forget-me-Not*, and the *Aurora*, and ithers?

North. Next month, my dear Shepherd, the horizon will be sparkling with stars. That most worthy and indefatigable Mr Ackermann was the first, I think, to rear a winter-flower of

[1] Their name was Corbett.

that kind, and its blossoms were very pretty and very fragrant. Alaric Watts then raised from the seed that bright consummate flower the *Souvenir;* other gardeners took the hint, and from the snow-wreaths peeped forth other annuals, each with its own peculiar character, and forming together a charming bouquet of rarest odour and blossom. I will bind them all up in one sweet-smelling and bright-glowing article, and lay it on my lady's bosom.[1]

Shepherd. I'm thinkin you'll hae written some pieces o' prose and verse in them yoursel.

North. Such is the strange stupidity of the editors, that not one among them has ever so much as asked me to give his work a decided superiority over all the rest.

Shepherd. Sumphs!

Tickler. Master Christopher North, there's Miss Mitford,[2] author of *Our Village*—an admirable person in all respects, of whom you have never, to my recollection, taken any notice in the Magazine. What is the meaning of that? Is it an oversight? Or have you omitted her name intentionally, from your eulogies on our female worthies?

North. I am waiting for her second volume. Miss Mitford has not, in my opinion, either the pathos or humour of Washington Irving; but she excels him in vigorous conception of character, and in the truth of her pictures of English life and manners. Her writings breathe a sound, pure, and healthy morality, and are pervaded by a genuine rural spirit—the spirit of merry England. Every line bespeaks the lady.

Shepherd. I admire Miss Mitford just excessively. I dinna wunner at her being able to write sae weel as she does about drawing-rooms wi' sofas and settees, and about the fine folk in them seein themsels in lookin-glasses frae tap to tae; but what puzzles the like o' me, is her pictures o' poachers, and tinklers, and pottery-trampers, and ither neerdoweels, and o' huts and hovels without riggin by the wayside, and the cottages o' honest puir men, and byres, and barns, and stack-yards; and merry-makins at winter-ingles, and courtship aneath trees, and at the gable-ends o' farmhouses, atween lads and lasses as laigh in life as the servants in her father's ha'. That's the puzzle, and that's the praise. But ae word

[1] The Annuals, in those days so numerous and gaudy, have long ago faded from our literature.

[2] Miss Mitford; born in 1787, died January 10, 1855.

explains a'—Genius—Genius—wull a' the metafhizzians in the warld ever expound that mysterious monysyllable?

Tickler. Monosyllable, James, did ye say?

Shepherd. Ay—Monysyllable! Doesna that mean a word o' three syllables?

Tickler. It's all one in the Greek—my dear James.

Shepherd. Do you ken onything about *Elizabeth de Bruce*, a novelle, in three volumes, announced by Mr Blackwood?

North. Nothing—but that it is the production of the lady[1] who, a dozen years ago, wrote *Clan Albin*, a novel of great merit, full of incident and character, and presenting many fine and bold pictures of external nature.

Shepherd. Is that the way o't? I ken her gran'ly—and she's little, if at a' inferior, in my opinion, to the author o' the *Inheritance*, which I aye thought was written by Sir Walter, as weel's *Marriage*, till it spunked out that it was written by a leddy.[2] But gude or bad, ye'll praise't, because it's a byuck o' Blackwood's.

North. That speech, James, is unworthy of you. With right good-will do I praise all good books published by Ebony—and know well that *Elizabeth de Bruce* will be of that class. But the only difference between my treatment of his bad books, and those of other publishers, is this—that I allow his to die a natural death, while on theirs I commit immediate murder.

Shepherd. Forgie me, Mr North. It's a' true you say—and mair nor that, as you get aulder you also get milder; and I ken few bonnier sichts than to see you sittin on the judgment-seat ance a-month, no at the Circuit, but the High Court o' Justiciary, tempering justice wi' mercy; and aften sentencing them that deserve death only to transportation for life, to some unknown land whence never mair come ony rumour o' their far-aff fates.

Tickler. Are *Death's Doings* worthy the old Anatomy?[3]

North. Yes—Mors sets his best foot foremost—and, like Yates,[4] plays many parts, shifting his dress with miraculous

[1] Mrs Johnston, compiler of *Meg Dodds' Cookery Book*, and for many years the principal writer in *Tait's Magazine*. See *ante*, p. 173, note 1.

[2] Miss Ferrier; born in 1782, died in 1854.

[3] *Death's Doings*, says the American editor, consisted of a series of engravings by Dagley, with letterpress by Croly, Jerdan, and others.

[4] A celebrated mimic and comedian.

alacrity, and popping in upon you unexpectedly, an old friend with a new face, till you almost wish him at the devil.

Tickler. We can't get up these things in Scotland.

North. No—no—we can't indeed, Tickler. *Death's Doings* will have a run.

Shepherd. That they wull, I'se warrant them, a rin through hut-and ha', or the Auld Ane's haun maun hae forgot its cunnin, and he maun hae gien ower writin wi' the pint o' his dart.

Tickler. James, a few minutes ago you mentioned the name of that prince of caricaturists, George Cruikshank; pray, have you seen his Phrenological Illustrations?[1]

Shepherd. That I hae,—he sent me the present o' a copy to Mount Benger; and I thocht me and the haill hoose wud hae faen distracted wi' lauchin. O sirs, what a plate is yon Pheeloprogeniteeveness? It's no possible to make out the preceese amount o' the family, but there wad seem to be somewhere about a dizzen and a half—the legitimate produce o' the Eerish couple's ain fruitfu' lines. A' noses alike in their langness, wi' sleight vareeities, dear to ilka pawrent's heart! Then what kissing, and hugging, and rugging, and ridin on backs and legs, and rockin o' craddles, and speelin o' chairs, and washing o' claes, and boilin o' pirtawties! And ae wee bit spare rib o' flesh twurlin afore the fire, to be sent roun' lick and lick about, to gie to the tongues of the contented crew a meat flavour, alang wi' the wershness o' vegetable maitter! Sma' wooden sodgers gaun through the manuel exercise on the floor—ae Nine-pin stannin by himsel amang prostrate comrades—a boat shaped wi' a knife, by him that's gaun to be a sailor, and on the wa', emblematical o' human Pheeloprogenitiveness (O bit that's a kittle word!) a hen and chickens, ane o' them perched atween her shouthers, and a countless cleckin aneath her outspread wings! What an observer o' Nature that chiel is!—only look at the back of the Faither's neck, and you'll no wonner at his family; for is't no like the back o' the neck o' a great bill?[2]

Tickler. "Language" is almost as good. What a brace of Billingsgates, exasperated, by long-continued vituperation, up to the very blood-vessel-bursting climax of insanity of speech! The one an ancient beldame, with hatchet face and

[1] *Phrenological Illustrations, or an Artist's View of the Craniological System of Drs Gall and Spurzheim.*

[2] *Bill*—bull.

shrivelled breast, and arms lean, and lank, and brown, as is the ribbed sea-sand, smacking her iron palms till they are heard to tinkle with defiance; the other, a mother-matron, with a baboon visage, and uddered like a cow, with thigh-thick arms planted with wide-open mutton fists on each heap of hips, and huge mouth bellowing thunder, split and cracked into pieces by eye-glaring rage! Then the basket of mute unhearing fish, so placid in the storm! Between the combatants, herself a victress in a thousand battles, a horrible virago of an umpire, and an audience "fit though few," of figures, which male, which female, it is hard to tell, smoking, and leering, with tongue-lolling cheek, finger-tip, and nose-tip, gnostically brought together, and a smart-bonneted Cyprian holding up her lily-hand in astonishment and grief for her sex's degradation, before the squint of a white-aproned fishmonger, who, standing calm amid the thunder, with paws in his breeches, regards the chaste complainant with a philanthropic grin.

North. Not a whit inferior is "Veneration." No monk ever gloated in his cell with more holy passion on the bosom of a Madonna, than that alderman on the quarter of prize beef fed by Mr Heavyside, and sprig-adorned, in token of victory over all the beasts in Smithfield, from knuckle to chine. You hear the far-protruding protuberance of his paunch rumbling, as, with thick-lipped opening mouth he inhales into palate, gullet, and stomach-bag, the smell of the firm fat, beneath whose crusted folds lies embosomed and imbedded the pure, precious lean! Wife—children—counter—iron-safe—Bank of England—stocks—all are forgotten. With devouring eyes, and outspread hand, he stands, staff-supported, before the beauty of the Beeve, as if he would, if he could, bow down and worship it! Were all the bells in the city, all the cannons in the Tower, to ring and roar, his ears would be deaf to the din in presence of the glorious object of his veneration. For one hour's mouth-worship of this idol, would he sink his soul and his hope of any other heaven. "Let me eat, were I to die!" is the sentiment of his mute, unmuttered prayer; and the passionate watering from eyeball, chop, and chin, bears witness to the intensity of his religious faith—say rather his adoration!

Shepherd. I wush Mr Ambrose had been in the room, that he micht hae telt us which o' the three has spoken the

greatest nonsense. Yet I'm no sure if a mair subdued style o' criticism would do for the warks o' the Fine Arts, especially for picturs.

Tickler. George Cruikshank's various and admirable works should be in the possession of all lovers of the Arts. He is far more than the Prince of Caricaturists,—a man who regards the ongoings of life with the eye of genius; and he has a clear insight through the exterior of manners into the passions of the heart. He has wit as well as humour—feeling as well as fancy—and his original vein appears to be inexhaustible.—Here's his health in a bumper.

Shepherd. Geordy Cruikshank! — But stop awee, my tummler's dune. Here's to him in a caulker, and there's no mony folk whase health I wad drink, during toddy, in pure speerit.

North. I will try you with another, James. A man of first-rate genius—yet a man as unlike as can be to George Cruikshank—William Allan.[1]

Shepherd. Rax ower the green bottle—Wully Allan! hurraw, hurraw, hurraw!

North. The "Assassination of the Regent Moray," my friend's last great work, is one of the finest historical pictures of modern times; and the Duke of Bedford showed himself a judicious patron of the art, in purchasing it. In all but colouring, it may stand by the side of the works of the great old masters. A few days ago I looked in upon him, and found him hard at work, in a large fur cap, like a wizard or an alchemist, on "Queen Mary's Landing at Leith." Of all the Queen Marys that ever walked on wood, the Phantom his genius has there conjured up, is the most lovely, beautiful, and majestic. Just alighted from her gilded barge, the vision floats along——

Shepherd. Come, come, nae mair description for ae nicht. *Ne quid nimis.*

Tickler. It will shine a star of the first magnitude and purest lustre——

Shepherd. Did you no hear me tellin Mr North that there was to be nae mair description?

Tickler. The Cockney critics will die of spite and spleen;

[1] Afterwards Sir William Allan, the late president of the Royal Scottish Academy. He died in 1850.

for the glory of Scotland is to them an abomination, and the sight of any noble work of the God-given genius of any one of her gifted sons, be it picture, or poem, or prose tale bright as poetry, turns their blood into gall, and forces them to eat their black hearts.

North. But England admires Mr Allan—throughout London Proper—and all her towns and cities. His pictures will in future ages be gazed at on the walls of galleries within the old palaces of her nobles——

Shepherd. I say nae mair description for this ae night—nae mair description—for either that, or else this tummler, that's far ower sweet, is beginning to mak me fin' raither queer about the stamach.

North. You alluded, a little while ago, to the *Quarterly Review*, James.—What think you of it, under the new management?

Shepherd. Na—I wad rather hear your ain opinion.

North. I may be somewhat too partial to the young gentleman,[1] James, who is now editor; and indeed consider him as a child of my own——

Shepherd. Wasna't me that first prophesied his great abeelities when he was only an Oxford Collegian, wi' a pale face and a black toozy head, but an ee like an eagle's, and a sort o' lauch about the screwed-up mouth o' him, that fules ca'd no canny, for they couldna thole the meanin o't, and either sat dumfoundered, or pretended to be engaged to sooper, and slunk out o' the room?

North. I have carefully preserved, among other relics of departed worth, the beautiful manuscript of the first article he ever sent me.

Tickler. In the Balaam-box?

Shepherd. Na, faith, Mr Tickler, you may set up your gab noo; but do you recollec how ye used to try to fleech and flatter him, when he begood sharpening his keelivine pen, and tearing aff the back o' a letter to sketch a bit caricature o' Southside? Na—I've sometimes thocht, Mr North, that ye were a wee feared for him yoursel, and used, rather without kennin't, to draw in your horns. The Balaam-box, indeed! Ma faith, had ye ventured on sic a step, ye micht just as weel at ance hae gien up the Magazine.

[1] John Gibson Lockhart, Esq., the late editor of the *Quarterly Review*. Born in 1793; died in 1854.

North. James, that man never breathed, nor ever will breathe, for whose contributions to the Magazine I cared one single curse.

Shepherd. Oh, man, Mr North, dinna lose your temper, sir. What for do you get sae red in the face at a bit puir, harmless, silly joke,—especially you that's sae wutty and sae severe yoursel, sae sarcastic and fu' o' satire, and at times (the love o' truth chirts[1] it out o' me) sae like a sleuth-hound, sae keen on the scent o' human bluid! Dear me! mony a luckless deevil, wi' but sma' provocation, or nane, Mr North, hae ye worried.

North. The Magazine, James, is the Magazine.

Shepherd. Is't really? I've nae mair to say, sir; that oracular response removes a' diffeeculties, and settles the hash o' the maitter, as Pierce Egan[2] would say, at ance.

North. Nothing but the purest philanthropy could ever have induced me, my dearest Shepherd, to suffer any contributors to the Magazine; and I sometimes bitterly repent having ever departed from my original determination (long religiously adhered to), to write, *proprio Marte*, the entire miscellany.

Shepherd. A' the world kens that—but whaur's the harm o' a few gude, sober, steady, judicious, regular, weel-informed, versateele, and biddable contributors?

North. None such are to be found on earth—You must look for them in heaven. Oh, James! you know not what it is to labour under a load of contributors! A prosy parson who, unknown to me, had, it seems, long worn a wig, and published an assize sermon, surprising me off my guard on a dull rainy day when the most vigilant of editors has fallen asleep, effects a footing in the Magazine. Oh what toil and trouble in dislodging the Doctor! The struggle may continue for years—and there have been instances of clerical contributors finally removed only by death. We remember rejecting all the Thirty-Nine Articles, before we could convince a rural Dean of our heterodoxy; but, thank heaven, the controversy, for our epistles were polemical, broke his heart. He was a parson of rare perseverance, and could never be brought to comprehend the meaning of that expression so largely illustrated during the course of our correspondence, "A rejected article." Back, in a wonderfully few days, the

[1] *Chirts*—spurts.

[2] The author of *Boxiana*.

unrejectable article used to come, from a pleasant dwelling among trees, several hundred miles off, drawn by four horses, and guarded by a man in scarlet raiment, ever and anon blowing a horn.

Shepherd. Dog on't, ye wicket auld Lucifer, hoo your een sparkle as you touzle the clergy! You just mind me o' a lion purlin wi' inward satisfaction in his throat, and waggin his tufted tail ower a Hottentot lying atween his paws, aye preferring the flesh o' a blackamoor to that o' a white man.

North. I respect and love the clergy, James. You know that well enough, and the feeling is mutual. Or, suppose a young lawyer who has been in a case with Mr Scarlett or Serjeant Cross, in the exultation of his triumph indites an article for me, whom he henceforth familiarly calls Old Christopher, in presence of the block which, in his guinea-per-week lodging in Lancaster, his wig dignifies and adorns. Vapid is it as a would-be-impressive appeal of Courtnay's, in mitigation of damages.—Yet return it with polite and peremptory respect, and long ere the moon hath filled her horns, lo and behold there is again and again redelivered from the green mail-cart the self-same well-known parcel of twine-entwisted whitey-brown! The lawyer is a leech, and will adhere to a Magazine after you have cut him in two; but a little Attic salt, if you can get him to swallow it, makes him relax his hold, and takes the bite out of him, or so weakens his power of jaw that he can be easily shaken off, like a little sick reptile from the foot of a steed, which has been attacked unawares in passing a ford, but on feeling the turf beneath his hoofs, sets off in a thundering gallop, with red open nostrils, snuffing the east wind.

Shepherd. Or suppose that some shepherd, more silly than his sheep that roams in yon glen where Yarrow frae still St Mary's Loch rows wimplin to join the Ettrick, should lay down his cruick, and aneath the shadow o' a rock, or a ruin, indite a bit tale, in verse or prose, or in something between the twa, wi' here and there aiblins a touch o' nature—what is ower ower aften the fate o' his unpretendin contribution, Mr North? A cauld glint o' the ee—a curl o' the lip—a humph o' the voice—a shake o' the head—and then,—but the warld, wicked as it is, could never believe it,—a wave o' your haun,

and instantly and for evermore is it swallowed up by the jaws of the Balaam-box, greedy as the grave, and hungry as Hades. Ca' ye that friendship—ca' ye that respec—ca' ye that sae muckle as the common humanity due to ane anither, frae a' men o' woman born, but which you, sir,—na, dinna frown and gnaw your lip—hae ower aften forgotten to show even to me, the Ettrick Shepherd, and the author o' the *Queen's Wake*.

North (*much affected*). What is the meaning of this, my dear, dear Shepherd? May the Magazine sink to the bottom of the Red Sea?—

Shepherd. Dinna greet, sir,—oh! dinna, dinna greet! Forgie me for hurtin your feelins; and be assured, that frae my heart I forgie you, if ever you hae hurted mine. As for wushin the Magazine to sink to the bottom o' the Red Sea, that's no possible; for its lichter far than water, and sink it never wull till the laws o' Nature hersel undergo change and revolution. My only fear is, under the present constitution o' the elements, that ae month or ither Maga will flee ower the moon, and thenceforth, a comet, will be eccentric on her course, and come careering in sight o' the inhabitants o' the yearth, perhaps, only ance or twice before Neddy Irving's[1] Day o' Judgment.

North. Then, James, imagine the miseries inflicted on me, an old grey-headed editor, by fat and fubzy Fellows of Colleges, who are obliged to sit upright in the act of an article, by protuberance of paunch—whose communication feels greasy to the touch, so fat is the style—and may be read in its oiliness, without obliteration during a thunder-shower!

Shepherd. They're what's ca'd Classical Scholars.

North. Intelligent naval officers are most formidable contributors. They have been known to take possession of a periodical by boarding. No way of getting rid of them but by blowing up the Magazine.

Shepherd. What! would ye quarrel wi' sic clever chiels as Captain Basil Ha', and Captain Pawrie, and Captain Lyon, and Captain Griffiths, and Captain Marryat, and a hunder ither naval heroes, gin ony o' them were to send you a sailing or a fechtin article, or an account o' soundings taen aff the roaring coast o' Labrador, or the wolf-howling Oonalashka, or

[1] The Rev. Edward Irving, a popular preacher of the day. He died in 1834.

ony ither rock-bound sea-shore, where that fierce auld heathen, Neptune, rampauges in faem and thunder, and lauchs to see the bit wee insignificant eighty-gun ships, or pechs[1] o' Forty-fours, dashed into flinders, like sae muckle spray, up and atower the precipices far ontil the dry land, where the cannibals are dancin round a fire, that they keep beetin wi' planks and spars o' the puir man-o'-war!

North. No, James. I would not run my head against any such Posts as those. But the few contributors I do cherish must be volunteers. And since such Dons of the Deck regularly read, but seldom write in Maga, all I can do is, to avail myself of their publications, and occasionally enrich Maga by a masterly review of a Voyage to Loo-Choo, or attempt to force the North-West Passage.

Shepherd. Do you get mony grautis articles?

North. I seldom pay for poetry. In cases of charity and courtesy—that is to say, of old women and young ones—my terms are, a shilling for a sonnet, a dollar for a dramatic scene, and for a single book of an epic, by way of specimen, why, I do not grudge a sovereign.

Shepherd. Heard ever onybody the like o' that? A book o' an epic poem, perhaps immortal, rated nae higher than a sheep fit for the butcher! Mr Tickler, what's the matter wi' you that you're no speakin? I howp[2] you're no sick?

Tickler. I was thinking pensively, James, of the worthy old woman whom to-day we saw decently interred in Greyfriars' Churchyard; the ancient lady with the green gown,[3] on whom the Shepherd was but too fond of playing off his gibes, his jeers, and his jokes. Peace to her ashes!

Shepherd. She was indeed, Mr Tickler, an honest auld body; and till she got into the natural dotage that is the doom o' a' flesh, she wasna wantin in smeddum, and could sing a sang, or tell a story, wi' nae sma' speerit. She was really an amusin chronicler o' the bygane times; and it was pleasant now and then, on a Saturday nicht, to tak a dish o' tea wi' her, and hearken to her clishmaclavers about the Forty-five. Her and me had never ony serious quarrel, and I'm proud to think she has left me a murnin ring.

Tickler. I shall not strip crape before Christmas, in token

[1] *Pechs*—pigmies. [2] *Howp*—hope. [3] *Constable's Magazine* is meant.

of my respect for her memory. It was affecting to see the seven young men as pall-bearers.[1]

Shepherd. Puir fallows! what'll become o' them noo? They maun hae recourse to the *Dumfries Magazine.*

North. Have ye no flowers, James, to wreath over her tomb?

Tickler. "Her memory"—in solemn silence.

Shepherd. Lend me your pocket-handketcher, Mr North. (*The Shepherd weeps.*)

North. It does one great good to see the flourishing condition of the Periodicals. Colburn has always some facetious town-articles; and although somewhat too exclusively adapted to the meridian of London, his Magazine is undoubtedly a pleasant miscellany. The very name of Campbell sheds a lambent lustre over its occasional dulness; and a single scrap of one of his Lectures on Poetry—such is my admiration of his delightful genius—redeems the character of a whole Number. Campbell is a fine critic, at once poetical and philosophical, full of feeling as of thought. The Prefaces to his Specimens—are they not exquisite? The Smiths are clever men—but why is not Hazlitt kicked out of the concern?

Shepherd. 'Cause Cammel kens he's hungry.

North. That may be a very good reason for sending an occasional loaf or fish to his lodgins, with Mr Campbell's, or Mr Colburn's compliments; but it is a very bad one for suffering him to expose his nakedness periodically to the reading public.

Tickler. It does not seem to me, from his writings, that Hazlitt's body is much reduced. The exhaustion is of mind. His mind has the wind-colic. It is troubled with flatulency. Let him cram it with borrowed or stolen victuals, yet it gets no nourishment. It is fast dying of atrophy; and when it belches its last, will be found to be a mere skeleton.

North. I perceive he has lately assumed the character, in *Colburn*, of Boswell Redivivus. Why, Jemmy Boswell was a gentleman born and bred—a difficulty in the way of impersonation, which Billy Hazlitt can never, in his most sanguine moments, hope to overcome.

Tickler. Then Jemmy was in good society, and a member

[1] See "The Pilgrimage to the Kirk of Shotts," *Blackwood's Magazine,* vol. v., p. 674.

of the Club. Moderate as were his talents, he was hand-in-glove with Burke, and Langton, and Beauclerk, and Percy, and the rest. He of *Table-Talk* has never risen higher than the lowest circle of the Press-gang—Reporters fight shy—and the Editors of Sunday newspapers turn up their noses at the smell of his approach.

North. Jemmy had a sycophantish, but a sincere admiration of the genius, erudition, and virtue of Ursa-Major, and in recording the noble growlings of the Great Bear, thought not of his own Scotch snivel. Billy hates and envies all that he pretends to love and venerate, for the best of reasons, because his eulogiums on others are libels on himself.

Tickler. And, pray, who may N. the ninny be, whom he takes for his Samuel Johnson?

North. A wasp called Nash.[1]

Tickler. How can Mr Campbell prostitute his pages so?

North. Indolence — indolence. The indolence of a man of genius, deepened by disgust, and getting rid of a loathsome dunce by admitting him within the sheets of the Magazine, just as a delicate boarding-school Miss has been known, in the impulse of pure horror, to marry a monster from Munster, in order to escape blindfold from his odious addresses!

Tickler. I like the *Monthly* much, since its incorporation with the *European.* Its fun and frolic is often capital; and, with a little more weighty matter, it will have success. It is free from bitterness and ill-nature. Gall is corrosive, and, like canker at the root of a flower, spoils the colour of the blossoms, and soon snaps the stalk. No man will ever be a satirist who has not a good heart. I like the *Monthly* much.

North. The *London* often contains striking articles. That Cantab was no small-beer in his bouncing. The Traveller on the Continent is terse, lively, and observant, and the Foreigner who writes about Greece must amuse the public. The editor has been frequently fortunate in his correspondents—then why so fretful in his temper, and discontented with the lieges?

Shepherd. What gars the cretur keep yaumer—yaumerin—yaumerin, as if he had aye the toothache, or a pain in his lug?

[1] For "Nash" we must read *Northcote* the painter, whose conversations were reported by Hazlitt in the *New Monthly Magazine,* and afterwards published in a volume.

Canna he clear himsel o' bile by a gran' emetic, keep his bowels open wi' peels, and wi' an unjaundiced ee look abroad over the glorious warks o' nature and o' art, till the sowl begins to burn within him (for he *has* a sowl), and generous sentiments come skelpin alang, thick and three-fauld, like bees out o' a bike, with stings, it is true, but stings keepit for severe occasions—happier far to murmur in shade and sunshine amang the honey-dew, harmless as birds or butterflies, and leaving wasps and hornets to extract poison from the very flowers, distilling by the power of piercing proboscis, the odours and the balm o' paradise frae earth's common weeds!

Tickler. Confound me, if, with all my Toryism, which, were I bled to death, would glitter like a pearl of price in my last heart's drop—I do not take in the *Westminster Review*, instead of paying fourpence a night for it to a Circulating Library. In the ring, they hit hard, and go right up to their man's head.

Shepherd. They're dour dowgs!

Tickler. Every party in the land should have its organ.

North. Even though it should be but a hand one.

Shepherd. Ye're baith nae better than twa auld Leeberals. What for did the *Westminster* sneer at me? Because I'm ane o' the principal writers in *Blackwood!* Puir, puir spite. Then what a confusion o' ideas to be angry at me for what I say at Awmrose's! Mayna a man say what he likes in a preevat party? But it was just the same way in the *Embro'*.

Tickler. You squabashed Jeffrey, James, in that famous letter anent the *Jacobite Relics.*[1]

Shepherd. Ay, that I did, like the red arm o' a hizzie wi' a beetle champing rumbledethumps. But it wasna Mr Jaffrey himsel, yon. I hae a great affection and respect for Mr Jaffrey; but why should a real man o' letters like him—"a man of morals and of manners too," a man proud, and justly proud, o' the rank in literature that his genius has won him—

[1] "I never saw the Shepherd," says Mr Lockhart, "so elated as he was on the appearance of a very severe article on this book (the *Jacobite Relics*) in the *Edinburgh Review;* for, to his exquisite delight, the hostile critic (Jeffrey) selected for *exceptive* encomium one 'old Jacobite strain,' — viz., 'Donald M'Gillivray,' which Hogg had fabricated the year before. Scott, too, enjoyed the joke almost as much as the Shepherd."—*Life of Scott,* vol. vi. p. 37, second edition. Hogg exposed the blunder in the letter referred to in the text.

why should he suffer ony o' his yelpin curs to bite the heels o' the Shepherd—perhaps hound him on wi' his ain gleg vice and ee—when I was daunerin amang the braes, wushin ill to nae leevin thing, and laith to tramp even on the dewy daisies aneath my feet?

North. By heavens, ignobly done!

Shepherd. However, ye may knock out the brains o' a mangy mongrel, wi' a stick or a stane, without ony ill-will to the master that aughts[1] him; and I'm sure that gin Mr Jaffrey comes ever ridin ower into Yarrow, by the Grey Meer's Tail, or straught through Peebles, he shanna want a warm welcome at Mount Benger frae me and the mistress—cocky-leeky, or some hare-soop, a rump o' corned beef, and a muirfowl hen, a rice puddin, and a platefu' o' pancakes.

Tickler. 'Pon my soul, James, I should like vastly to be of the party—an admirable selection! What an absurd old beldame is Madame Genlis,[2] in the last number of the *Quarterly!* Have you read her Memoirs, James?

Shepherd. Me read her Memoirs!—no me indeed! But I have read the article on the slut, French and a'. There can be nae doubt but that she would marry yet! Hoo the auld lass wad stan' paintin her shrivelled cheeks at a plate-glass mirror, wi' a frame o' naked Cupids! Hoo she wad try to tosh up[3] the rizzered haddies[4] o' her breest, and wi' paddins round out her hainches! Hoo she wad smirk, and simper and leer wi' her bleered rheumy een at the marriage ceremony before a Papish Priest!—and wha wad venture to say that she wadna enterteen expectations and howps o' fa'in into the family-way on the wrang side o' aughty? Think ye she wad tak to the nursin, and show undue partiality to her first-born ower a' the ither childer?

North. Old age—especially the old age of a lady—should be treated with respect—with reverence. I cannot approve of the tone of your interrogations, James.

Shepherd. Yes, Mr North—old age ought indeed to be treated with respect and reverence. That's a God's truth. The ancient grandame, seated at the ingle amang her children's children, wi' the Bible open on her knees, and lookin

[1] *Aughts*—owns.

[2] She was governess to King Louis Philippe in his childhood, and died in 1830, aged 84.

[3] *Tosh up*—display to best advantage.

[4] *Rizzered haddies*—haddocks dried in the sun.

solemn, almost severe, with her dim eyes, through specs shaded by grey hairs, — now and then brichtening up her faded countenance wi' a saintly smile, as she saftly lets fa' her shrivelled hand on the golden head o' some wee bit hafflin imp sittin cowerin by her knee, and, half in love half in fear, opening not his rosy lips—Such an aged woman as that—for leddy I shall not ca' her—is indeed an object of respect and reverence; and beats there a heart within human bosom that would not rejoice, wi' holy awe, to lay the homage of its blessing at her feet?—But——

North. Beautiful, James!—Tickler, is not that beautiful?

Shepherd. I was thinking just then, sirs, o' my ain mother.

North. You needed not to have said so, my dear Shepherd.

Shepherd. But to think o' an auld, bedizzened, painted hag o' a French harridan ripin[1] the ribs o' her wasted carcass wi' the poker o' vanity, to wauken a spark in the dead ashes o' her wonted fires, and tryin a' the secrets o' memory and imagination to kindle a glow in the chitterin skeleton——

North. Tickler, what imagery!

Shepherd. To hear her gloating ower sins she can no longer commit—nay, ower the sins o' them that are flesh and bluid nae mair, but part o' the moulderin corruption o' catacombs and cemetaries;—to see the unconscious confusion in which the images o' virtue and vice come waverin thegither afore her een, frae the lang-ago history o' them that, in life, were her ain kith and kin——

Tickler. Stop, James!—stop, I beseech you!

Shepherd. To hearken till her drivellin, in the same dotage o' undistinguishing heartlessness, o' chaste matrons that filled the secret drawers in their cabinets wi' love-letters, no frae their ain husbands, but frae princes, and peers, and counts, and gentlemen, and a' sorts o' riff-raff, as plain as pike-staffs ettlin at adultery;—o' nae less chaste maidens blushin in the dark, in boudoirs, in the grup o' unprincipled paramours, let lowse[2] upon them by their verra ain fathers and mothers, and, after years o' sic perilous rampaugin wi' young sodgers, walin[3] out ane at last for her man, only to plant horns on his head, and lose a haud on the legitimacy o' ony ane o' her subsequent children except the first, and him mair than apocryphal;—o' limmers, that flang their chastity with open hand

[1] *Ripin*—poking. [2] *Lowse*—loose. [3] *Walin*—choosing.

frae them like chaff, and, rolling along in flunky-flanked eckipages by the Boulevards o' Paris, gloried in the blaze o' their iniquity——

North. I must positively shut your mouth, James.—You will burst a blood-vessel in your righteous indignation. That's right, empty your tumbler.

Tickler. She had many good points about her, nevertheless, James. You are too stern a moralist. Her *petits soupers* were very piquant of old; and the worst thing I knew about Madame Genlis was her snub nose, which, like a piece of weeping Parmesan, had generally a drop at the end of it. To me she was never lovable.

Shepherd. I could hae fa'en in love mysel wi' Madam de Stawl,[1]—and, had she visited Scotland, I should have done my best to be with her *un homme à bonnes fortunes.*

Tickler. Why, Hogg, you pronounce French like a native. Idiom perfect too!

Shepherd. I took half-a-dozen lessons frae Hamilton; for I had a fancy for his system on account o' the absence o' grammar, which is waur than plague, pestilence, or famine.

Tickler. Do you think, James, you could teach Mr Hamilton Ettrick as expeditiously as he has taught you French?

Shepherd. Ou ay. I'll undertake to teach him Ettrick in twal lessons, and the four volumes of Dr Jamieson's Scottish Dictionary—with three thousand additional words that I intend publishing in a Supplement forbye.

North. There is power in what is called, most absurdly and ignorantly, the Hamiltonian System; but Hamilton himself has shown the white feather before a manly challenger, and stands discomfited and dished.

Shepherd. He's a bauld fellow that Mackay o' the High School. The Hielan bluid o' him was a' in a low, and he wad hae foughten on to the last gasp. I'm nae great scholar, but I love speerit.

Tickler. After all his blustering, Jupiter Tonans ought not to have declined the combat with the Titan. Hamilton might have praised his own system, without so contemptuously treating every modification of every other, and, without doubt, he was himself the challenger. So that the big words

[1] Madame de Stael-Holstein, daughter of M. Necker the celebrated French financier. Born in 1766; died in 1817.

he thundered before Mr Mackay entered the lists, and that at the time might have been forgiven as the unmeasured vaunting of an enthusiast, could only be described, after his craven refusal to meet his man, as the vapouring of a bully and a braggadocio.

North. The study of languages is a great mystery—but an itinerant like Hamilton is assuredly not the man to clear it up. Why does he roam about from town to town? Can't he bring his boat to an anchor, like any other conscientious teacher, and give his system the sanction of a series of successful years?

Tickler. If it be sound it will prosper—and the High School and the New Academy will follow the example of that chicken-hearted Institution at Baltimore, and shut their gates.

North. I take it upon me to give a challenge to Mr Hamilton, from two young gentlemen whom I have never had the pleasure of taking by the hand—the dux of the Rector's Class in the High School, and the dux of the Rector's class in the New Academy. If both the one and the other of those most promising boys do not beat him blind in Greek and Latin, in a public competition, I will forfeit to the Hamiltonian bugbear a barrel of oysters during every week of every month whose name contains the letter R, for the remainder of his existence.

Shepherd. He daurna do't—he daurna do't. I'll back the laddies, to the value o' a score o' ginmers, in grammar, and syntax, and parsing, and prosody, and construin, and the lave o't; and my name's no Jamie Hogg gin the great big muckle sumph doesna rin out o' the ring wi' his tail atween his legs like a lurcher, during Cæsar's Commentaries.

North. He should have had more pride and independence, more trust and confidence in himself and his system, than to come down to Edinburgh at the wagging of the little finger of the *Edinburgh Review*.[1] There was heard in our streets the blowing of a penny trumpet, and forthwith appeared thereon the man with the gift of tongues. What made him leave Liverpool?

Tickler. Detection, discomfiture, and disgrace. There, too, he was challenged; and there, too, he took to his heels, with

[1] The Rev. Sydney Smith, the sworn foe to humbugs generally, patronised the Hamiltonian humbug in the *Edinburgh Review*, 1826.

such headlong precipitancy, that we have heard he had nearly plunged into one of the wet docks.

Shepherd. Is that maitter o' fact, or metaphorical?

North. Metaphorical. Two clever scribes, Verbeiensis and Cantabrigiensis, smashed him in argument all to shivers—showed up his utter ignorance and destitution of all scholarship—and hung round his neck a label inscribed with large letters—HUMBUG.

Tickler. I have the pamphlet in which the impostor is seen stripped, and flagellated, and writhing in the most ludicrous distortion of face and figure, without a leg to stand on, his tongue struck dumb in his cheek, and the vomitory of vociferation hermetically sealed. It would furnish material for a good article. Eh?[1]

North. James, what were you going to say about Madame de Stael?

Shepherd. That there were some things about her that I could not approve. But she was, nevertheless, what I would ca' a fine speerit, and her name will be enrolled, on account of her rare and surpassing genius, often nobly employed, among the great benefactors o' her specie.

North. Agreed. She was in many many things a noble creature. As for a certain gang of strumpets, they and their correspondence have escaped infamy in this noble island of ours, by dropping, with other outlandish filth and carrion, into the cess-pool of oblivion. Much was said, indeed, a few years ago, by writers ambitious of a reputation for acquaintance with the literature of modern France, about their wit, and their elegance, and other accomplishments of those more than demireps; and their meretricious charms, it was hinted, might even, if too fondly contemplated, have the power to eclipse the soberer lustre of the character of our British female worthies.

Tickler. Whereas their dulness was nearly equal to their profligacy; and the learned lovers, Presidents of Philosophical Societies, and so forth, whom their insatiable licentiousness disgusted, their wearisome stupidity sent asleep.

[1] The Hamiltonian method of teaching languages by means of interlinear translations—the most irrational *charlatanerie* ever devised to obstruct the progress of education—has not found, for many years, a single advocate in its favour.

North. Eternal contempt, Tickler, in spite of all the fulsome eulogies by their friends on this side of the Channel, must pursue the memory of the few philosophers who are not already forgotten, that were not ashamed to submit their scientific speculations—ay, their moral reflections on conscience, and their inquiries into the origin of evil, and their conjectures on the mysteries of God's Providence, to the feelings, and opinions, and judgments of weak and wicked women, whose last favours were lavished with a profusion, in which freedom of choice was lost on their parts, and freedom of rejection on that of their favourites, on an endless series of grinning and grimacing Abbés, and Esprits Forts, and Academicians, all muttering, and mowing, and chattering, and scraping, and bowing, and shrugging their shoulders complacently to one another, with hatred and jealousy, and envy, and rage, and revenge, boiling or rankling in their hearts!

Shepherd. Order—order—chair—chair! Tickler, tak North through hauns.

Tickler. What? James!

Shepherd. Ae flash o' your ee sets me richt. Oh, sirs! what a glorious galaxy o' female genius and virtue have we to gaze on, with admiration pure and unreproved, in our native hemisphere. There—that star is the large and lustrous star o' Joanna Baillie; and there are the stars o' Hamilton—and Edgeworth—and Grant—and Austen—and Tighe—and Mitford—and Hemans! Beautiful and beloved in all the relations of Christian life, these are the Women, Mr North, maids, wives, or widows, whom the religious spirit of this Protestant land will venerate as long as the holy fires of a pure faith burn upon her altars. These are the Ladies, Mr Tickler—and thank God we have many like them, although less conspicuous—whom to guard from insult of look, whisper, or touch, what man, English, Scotch, or Irish, but would bare his breast to death? And why? Because the union o' genius, and virtue, and religion, and morality, and gentleness, and purity, is a soul-uplifting sight, and ratifies the great bond of Nature, by which we are made heirs of the immortal sky.

North. Timothy, you and I had really better be mum till morning.

Tickler. He beats us both at our own weapons—and I begin to think I stutter.

(Mr Ambrose *enters.*)

Shepherd. As sure's death, there's the oysters. O man, Awmrose, but you've the pleasantest face o' ony man o' a' my acquaintance. Here's ane as braid's a mushroom. This is Saturday nicht, and they've a' gotten their bairds shaved. There's a wee ane awa down my wrang throat; but deil a fears, it'll find its way into the stamach. A waught[1] o' that porter gars the drums o' ane's lugs crack and play dirl.

Tickler. They are in truth precious powldowdies. More boards, Ambrose, more boards.

Shepherd. Yonner are half-a-dizzen fresh boards on the side-tables. But more porter, Awmrose—more porter. Canna ye manage mair than twa pots at a time, man, in ilka haun? For twunty years, Mr North, I used aye to blaw aff the froth, or cut it smack-smooth across wi' the edge o' my loof; but for the last ten or thereabouts, indeed ever since the Magazine, I hae sooked in froth and a', nor cared about diving my nose in't. Faith, I'm thinkin that maun be what they ca' Broon Stoot; for Mr Pitt and Mr Fox are nearing ane anither on the wa' there, as gin they were gaun to fecht; and either the roof's rising, or the floor fa'in, or I'm hafflins fou!

Tickler. Mr Pitt and Mr Fox!—why, James, you are dreaming. This is not the Blue Parlour!

North. A Psychological Curiosity!

Shepherd. Faith it is curious aneuch, and shows the power o' habit in producing a sort o' delusion on the ocular spectrum. I wad hae sworn I saw the lang, thin, lank feegur, and cocked-up nose o' Pitt, wi' his hand pressed down wi' an authoritative nieve, on a heap o' Parliamentary papers; and the big, clumsy carcass, arched een, and jolly chops o' Fox, mair like a master coal-merchant than an orator or a statesman;—but they've vanished away, far aff, and wee, wee like atomies, and this is not the Blue Parlour sure aneuch.

North. To think of one of the Noctes Ambrosianæ passing away without ever a single song!

Shepherd. It hasna past awa yet, Mr North. It's no eleven, man; and to hinner twal frae strikin untimeously,—and on a Saturday nicht I hate the sound o't—Mr Awmrose, do you put back, ae round, the lang hand o' the knock. Yese hae a

[1] *Waught*—a large draught.

sang or twa afore we part, Mr North; but, even without music, hasna this been a pleasant nicht? I sall begin noo wi' pepper, vinegar, and mustard, for the oysters by theirsels are getting a wee saut. By the tramping on the stairs I jalouse the playhouse is scalin. Whisht, Mr North! keep a calm sugh, or ODoherty will be in on us, and gar us break the Sabbath morning. Noo, let's draw in our chairs to the fireside, and, when a's settled in the tither parlours, I'll sing you a sang.

[*Curtain falls.*

XI.

(JANUARY 1827.)

Scene,—Ambrose's Hotel, Picardy Place—Paper Parlour.

NORTH *and the* SHEPHERD.

Shepherd. What a fire! That mixtur o' English and Scotch coal makes a winter nicht glorious. Staun yont, Mr North, sir, till wi' this twa-haunded poker I smash the centre lump, as Mordecai Mullion has smashed the *os frontis* o' M'Culloch.[1]

North. James, you cannot imagine what a noble figure you reflect in the mirror. I should like vastly to have your portrait taken in that very attitude.

Shepherd. Mercy on us! there's a tongue o' flame loupt out upon the carpet. Whare's the shool? Nae shool—nae shool! Let's up wi't in my twa loofs. Whew, whew, whew! That's gude for frost-bitten fingers. There the Turkey's no a whit singed. Do you fin' the smell o' burnin, sir?

North. Look at your right hand, my dear Shepherd!

Shepherd. It's a' lowin. Whew—whew—whew!—That comes o' haein hairy hauns. Belyve[2] the blisters 'll be risin like foam-bells; but deil may care. Oh, sir! but I'm real happy to see you out again; and to think that we're to hae a twa-handed crack, without Tickler or ony o' the rest kennin that

[1] Under the name of "Mordecai Mullion" Professor Wilson published a pamphlet, in which the eminent political economist referred to in the text was attacked, chiefly on the ground that, in his different publications, he was in the habit of repeating the same opinions, disguised in a slightly varied phraseology. Mr M'Culloch might perhaps have found a sufficient defence in the plea that the topics of which he treated rendered such iteration almost unavoidable.

[2] *Belyve*—soon.

we're at Awmrose's. Gie's your haun again, my dear sir. Noo, what shall we hae?

North. A single jug, James, of Glenlivet—not very strong, if you please; for——

Shepherd. A single jug o' Glenleevit—no very strang! My dear sir, hae you lost your judgment? You ken my reçate for toddy, and ye never saw't fail yet. In wi' a' the sugar, and a' the whusky, whatever they chance to be, intil the jug about half fu' o' water—just say three minutes to get aff the boil—and then the King's health in a bumper.

North. You can twist the old man, like a silk thread, round your finger, James. But remember, I'm on a regimen.

Shepherd. Sae am I—five shaves o' toasted butter and bread—twa eggs—a pound o' kipper sea-trout or saumon, be it mair or less—and three o' the big cups o' tea to breakfast; ae platefu' o' corned beef, and potatoes and greens—the leg and the wing o' a how-towdy—wi' some tongue or ham—a cut o' ploom-puddin, and cheese and bread, to denner—and ony wee trifle afore bedtime. That's the regimen, sir, that I'm on the noo, as far as regards the victualling department; and I canna but say, that, moderate as it is, I thrive on't decently aneuch, and haena fun' mysel stouter or stranger, either in mind or body, sin' the King's visit to Scotland. I hae made nae change on my lickor sin' the *Queen's Wake*, and the time you first dined wi' me in Anne Street—only I hae gien up porter, which is swallin drink, and lays on naething but fat and foziness.

North. I forget if you are a great dreamer, James?

Shepherd. Sleepin or waukin?

North. Sleeping—and on a heavy supper.

Shepherd. Oh! sir, I not only pity but despise the coof, that aff wi' his claes, on wi' his nichtcap, into the sheets, doun wi' his head on the bowster, and then afore anither man could hae weel taken aff his breeks, snorin awa wi' a great open mouth, without a single dream ever travellin through his fancy! What wad be the harm o' pittin him to death?

North. What! murder a man for not dreaming, James?

Shepherd. Na—but for no dreaming, and for snorin at the same time. What for blaw a trumpet through the haill house at the dead o' nicht, just to tell that you've lost your soul

and your senses, and become a breathin clod? What a blow it maun be to a man to marry a snorin woman! Think o' her during the haill hinuymoon, resting her head, with a long gurgling snorting snore, on her husband's bosom!

North. Snoring runs in families; and, like other hereditary complaints, occasionally leaps over one generation, and descends on the next. But my son, I have no doubt, will snore like a trooper.

Shepherd. Your son?! Try the toddy, sir. Your son?!

North. The jug is a most excellent one, James. Edinburgh is supplied with very fine water.

Shepherd. Gie me the real Glenleevit—such as Awmrose aye has in the hoose—and I weel believe that I could mak drinkable toddy out o' sea-water. The human mind never tires o' Glenleevit, ony mair than o' cauler[1] air. If a body could just find out the exac proper proportion o' quantity that ought to be drank every day, and keep to that, I verily trow that he micht leeve for ever, without dying at a', and that doctors and kirkyards would go out of fashion.

North. Have you had any snow yet, James, in the Forest?

Shepherd. Only some skirrin[2] sleets—no aneuch to track a hare. But, safe us a'! what a storm was yon, thus early in the season too, in the Highlands! I wush I had been in Tamantowl[3] that nicht. No a wilder region for a snow-storm on a' the yearth. Let the wun' come frae what airt it likes, richt doun Glen Aven, or up frae Grantown, or across frae the woods o' Abernethy, or far aff frae the forests at the Head o' Dee, you wad think that it was the Deevil himsel howlin wi' a' his legions. A black thunder-storm's no half sae fearsome to me as a white snaw ane. There is an ocular grandeur in it, wi' the opening heavens sending forth the flashes o' lichtnin, that brings out the burnished woods frae the distance close upon you where you staun, a' the time the hills rattling like stanes on the roof o' a hoose, and the rain either descending in a universal deluge, or here and there pouring down in *straths*, till the thunder can scarcely quell the roar o' a thousand cataracts.

North. Poussin—Poussin—Poussin!

Shepherd. The heart quakes, but the imagination even in its awe is elevated. You still have a hold on the external

[1] *Cauler*—fresh. [2] *Skirrin*—flying. [3] A village in Banffshire.

world, and a lurid beauty mixes with the magnificence till there is an austere joy in terror.

North. Burke—Burke—Burke—Edmund Burke!

Shepherd. But in a nicht snaw-storm the ragin world o' elements is at war with life. Within twenty yards o' a human dwelling, you may be remote from succour as at the Pole. The drift is the drift of death. Your eyes are extinguished in your head—your ears frozen—your tongue dumb. Mountains and glens are all alike—so is the middle air eddying with flakes and the glimmerin heavens. An army would be stopt on its march—and what then is the tread o' ae puir solitary wretch, man or woman, struggling on by theirsel, or sittin doun, ower despairing even to pray, and fast congealin, in a sort o' dwam[1] o' delirious stupefaction, into a lump o' icy and rustling snaw! Wae's me, wae's me! for that auld woman and her wee granddauchter, the bonniest lamb, folk said, in a' the Highlands, that left Tamantowl that nicht, after the merry Strathspeys were over, and were never seen again till after the snaw, lying no five hunder yards out o' the town, the bairn wrapt round and round in the crone's plaid as weel as in her ain, but for a' that, dead as a flower-stalk that has been forgotten to be taken into the house at nicht, and in the mornin brittle as glass in its beauty, although, till you come to touch it, it would seem to be alive!

North. With what very different feelings one would read an account of the death of a brace of Bagmen[2] in the snow! How is that to be explained, James?

Shepherd. You see the imagination pictures the twa Bagmen as Cockneys. As the snaw was getting dour at them, and giein them sair flaffs and dads on their faces, spittin in their verra een, ruggin their noses, and blawin upon their blubbery lips, till they blistered, the Cockneys wad be waxing half feared and half angry, and dammin the "Heelans," as the cursedest kintra that ever was kittled. But wait awee, my gentlemen, and you 'll keep a lowner sugh or you get half-way from Dalnacardoch to Dalwhinnie.[3]

North. A wild district, for ever whirring, even in mist snow, with the gorcock's wing.

Shepherd. Whisht — haud your tongue, till I finish the

[1] *Dwam*—swoon.

[2] Commercial travellers.

[3] In the Highlands of Perthshire.

account o' the death of the twa Bagmen in the snaw. Ane o' their horses—for the creturs are no ill mounted—slidders awa doun a bank, and gets jammed into a snaw-stall, where there's no room for turnin. The other horse grows obstinate wi' the sharp stour in his face, and proposes retreating to Dalnacardoch, tail foremost; but no being sae weel up to the walkin or the trottin backwards, as that English chiel Townsend, the pedestrian, he cloits[1] doun first on his hurdies, and then on his tae side, the girths burst, and the saddle hangs only by a tack to the crupper.

North. Do you know, James, that though you are manifestly drawing a picture intended to be ludicrous, it is to me extremely pathetic?

Shepherd. The twa Cockneys are now forced to act as dismounted cavalry through the rest of the campaign, and sit doun and cry—pretty babes o' the wood—in each ither's arms! John Frost decks their noses and their ears with icicles—and each vulgar physiognomy partakes of the pathetic character of a turnip, making an appeal to the feelings on Halloween.—Dinna sneeze that way when ane's speakin, sir!

North. You ought rather to have cried, "God bless you."

Shepherd. A' this while neither the snaw nor the wund has been idle—and baith Cockneys are sitting up to the middle, poor creturs, no that verra cauld, for driftin snaw sune begins to fin' warm and comfortable, but, wae's me! unco, unco sleepy—and not a word do they speak!—and now the snaw is up to their verra chins, and the bit bonny, braw, stiff, fause shirt-collars that they were sae proud o' sticking at their chafts, are as hard as airn, for they've gotten a sair Scotch starchin,—and the fierce North cares naething for their towsy hair a' smellin wi' Kalydor and Macassar, no it indeed, but twurls it a' into ravelled hanks, till the frozen mops bear nae earthly resemblance to the ordinary heads o' Cockneys;—and hoo indeed should they, lying in sic an unnatural and out-o'-the-way place for them, as the moors atween Dalnacardoch and Dalwhinnie?

North. Oh James—say not they perished!

Shepherd. Yes, sir, they perished; under such circumstances, it would have been too much to expect of the vital spark that it should not have fled. It did so—and a pair of more inter-

[1] *Cloits*—falls heavily.

esting Bagmen never slept the sleep of death. Gie me the lend o' your handkercher, sir, for I agree wi' you that the picture's verra pathetic.

North. Did you read, James, in one of Maga's Leading Articles, called "Glance over Selby's Ornithology," an account of the Red Tarn Raven Club devouring the corpse of a Quaker on the dark brow of the mighty Helvellyn?[1]

Shepherd. Ay,—what about it? I could hae dune't as weel mysel.

North. Do you know, James, that it gave great offence?

Shepherd. I hae nae doubt that the birds o' prey, that keep gorging themsels for weeks after a great battle, gie great offence to thousands o' the wounded,—picking out their een, and itherwise hurting their feelings. Here a bluidy straight beak tweakin a general officer by the nose, and there a no less bluidy crooked ane tearing aff the ee-broos o' a drummer, and happin aff to eat them on the hollow round o' his ain drum,—on which never will tattoo be beaten ony mair, for a musket-ball has gone through the parchment, and the "stormy music," as Cammel ca's it, is hushed for ever. What need a description o' the dreadfu' field, when it has been crappit and fallowed year after year, gie offence to ony rational reader? Surely no; and, therefore, why shudder at a joke about the death o' ae Quaker?—Tuts, tuts, it's a' nonsense.

North. Drinking, dancing, swearing, and quarrelling, going on all the time in Tomantoul, James, for a fair there is a wild rendezvous, as we both know, summer or winter; and thither flock the wildest spirits of the wildest clans—old soldiers, poachers, outlaws, bankrupt tradesmen from small towns, and bankrupt farmers from large farms, horse-coupers, cattle-dealers, sticket ministers, schoolmasters without scholars, land-measurers, supervisors and excisemen, tinkers, trampers, sportsmen, stray poets, contributors to Magazines—perhaps an editor—people of no profession, and men literally without a name, except it be recorded in the *Hue and Cry*, all imprisoned in a snow-storm, James! What matter if the whole body of them were dug out dead in the morning from the drift, a hundred feet high?

Shepherd. Ma faith, North, you've taen the word out o' my mouth; but hooly, hooly—let's get back frae Tamantowl to

[1] See the *Recreations of Christopher North*, vol. iii. p. 81.

Embro'. Onything gude in leeterature, sir, sin' Lammas Fair?

North. Why, my dear James, I live so entirely out of the world now, that you could not apply, for information of that kind, to a person less likely to afford it. I live on the Past.

Shepherd. Rather spare diet, sir, and apt to get musty. I prefer the Present—na, even the verra Future itsel—to the Past. But the Three a' mixed thegither, like rumbledethumps, makes a gran' head-dish at denner, or sooper either; and I never eat it onywhere in sic perfection as at Mr Awmrose's.

North. Have you heard, James, that we are absolutely going to have some war again? A furious Army of Refugees have invaded Portugal, and threaten to overthrow the Constitution.

Shepherd. I fear the plook o' war 'll no come to a head. There's a want o' maitter. Leave the Portugals to fecht the collyshangie[1] out by theirsels, and there may be some cracked crowns. But twa-three regiments o' our red-coats 'll put out the fire o' civil war afore it's weel kindled—whilk 'll be a great pity. Isna there something rather ridiculous-like in the soun' o' an Army o' Refugees? It's only next best to an Army o' Runaways.

North. Britain, James, and France—what think you of a war between them, James?

Shepherd. For Godsake, dinna let us begin wi' politics, for under them I aye fin' my nature stupified within me—as if I were taukin no frae my ain thochts, but out o' a newspaper. A' I say is, that the times are wersh[2] without bloodshed.

North. Did you read Canning's speech?

Shepherd. Na; but I'm gaun up to London in Feberwar, to hear him in the House o' Commons. Think ye that the best discourse "by Cameron thundered, or by Renwick poured," of old, to a congregation of Covenanters, in a sky-roofed kirk o' cliffs in the wilderness, would have done to be read in Awmrose's here, wi' twa caunels on the table, and twa on the brace-piece helpin the fire to illuminate a board o' oysters, or ashet[3] o' rizzered haddies, or a trencher o' toasted cheese? Nae doubt the discourse wad hae been a gude discourse onywhere—but where the hands uplifted to heaven, the hair of

[1] *Collyshangie*—squabble. [2] *Wersh*—insipid.
[3] *Ashet*—dish; obviously a corruption of the French *Assiette*.

the preacher streaming in the wind, his eyes penetrating the clouds, the awful sound o' one voice, and one voice only, heard in the hush o' the desert?—where the fixed faces o' the congregation, intent as if but one soul animated the whole mass, a' armed even on the Sabbath-day, and forgettin when hearkenin to the tidings o' salvation, o' the soun' o' the hoofs o' bluidy Claverse's dragoons?—Just sae in their ain way wi' Cannin's orations. You maun see the man himsel—and they say he has a' the outward powers and graces o' a great speaker; and as for his inwards, there can be nae doubt that his brain has a harl[1] o' strong bricht thochts like fire-flaughts enlichtenin, or, as needs be, witherin and consumin a' opposition, like chaff, or stubble, or heather a-bleeze on the hill.

North. You will also have an opportunity, James, of hearing Hume.[2]

Shepherd. O man! but he maun be an impident cretur that Hume, to lowse his tinkler jaw in the Hoose, afore three hunder British and Eerish gentlemen, wi' the sum of fifty-four punds seven shillings and eightpence three farthings one doit, in his breeches pocket, diddled in interest frae the fun's o' the Greek Pawtriots, fechtin in their poverty for the freedom o' their native land.[3]

North. He offered to refer the affair to arbitration, you know, James.

Shepherd. And what for didna he fix on three arbitrawtors? Does he think folk are to come forward o' their ain accord? He seems to think it a great feather in his cap that he didna commit evendoun cheatery and thievery on the Greeks. Grant that, which is mair than doubtful, hasna he proved himsel a greedy greedy fallow, and fonder far to hear the clink o' his ain cash than the shouts o' liberty frae that ance glorious country, whare genius and valour were native to the soil, and whare yet they are not dead but sleepin, and may—ay, will arise frae the bluidy dust, and tear out the Turkish crescent from the sky, ance mair free to the silver feet of their ain Diana!

North. He is a poor creature, in mind, soul, and heart

[1] *Harl*—abundance.

[2] Joseph Hume, for many years the leading Radical reformer in the House of Commons. He died in 1855, aged 78.

[3] See *ante*, p. 228-9, note.

alike—and wears the interest of his scrip in his very face, in the hardness and hue of brass. How else durst he have risen from his breech after Canning—and like a turkey-cock, that is a bubbly-jock, James, have given vent to his vile gobble, ere the House had ceased to hear the cry, and view the flight, of the Eagle?

Shepherd. "An honest man's the noblest work of God!"

North. The man's mind has so long busied itself with pounds, shillings, pence, halfpence, farthings, and doits, James, that it has utterly lost all perception of the higher interests to which they may be made subservient—and for which alone they can have any value in a nation's eyes.

Shepherd. I wad hate to dine wi' him at a tavern—for he wad aye be for threepin doun[1] the bill; and oh! but he wad be shabby—shabby to the waiter. He wad never gie ony waiter—even if she was a lassie—mair than tippence—and aiblins ane o' the bawbees o' an obsolete sort, that wadna gang nowadays—what they ca' an Eerish rap, or ane issued lang syne by some cotton-spinner in Manchester. We'll hear o' nae mair public denners to sic a meeser.

North. There is no saying, James. Whom will not party spirit in these days set up as an idol, basely bow down, and crawling worship it? Mr Brougham gave the scrub a hard hit on the kidneys, and it must have made him wince.

Shepherd. Hoo was that?

North. Mr Brougham, in allusion to Hume's speech, declared himself incapable of "listening to the arithmetic of the *Honourable* Member for Aberdeen. There were circumstances," he said, "in which countries—*as well as individuals*—might be placed, in which to *compute cost* was impossible, frivolous, *disgraceful* alike to the country and to the *individual!*"

Shepherd. Weel dune, Hairy. That was capital.

North. But before Hume had recovered from that well-delivered hit, Mr Brougham put in a facer that broke the brass like an egg-shell. "To those upon whom such topics" (national faith and national honour, James) "are thrown away, however, and to whom the *expense* which any of their preparations might cost, was *so considerable an object*, and to how much it might mount up *by the loss of the interest* (loud

[1] *Threepin doun*—beating down.

laughter) upon it, and *of interest upon that interest* (loud laughter), he could put it to all such reasoners," &c.

Shepherd. Weel dune, Hairy,—weel dune, Hairy. You're an ambitious chiel yoursel, and wad do muckle to gain the object of your ambition; but you never were avaricious—you have a sowl aboon that,—and I could forgie ye a' your sins for that noble disdain of the meanest member of the legislative body. He can never haud up the head o' him after that. Weel dune, Hairy. Mr North, let's drink Mr Brumm's health in a cauker.

North. Here he goes.—Heavens! James, is that a brilliant among the hair of your little finger?

Shepherd. O' the first water. But you've seen't afore a thousand and a thousand times. I got it frae his Grace the late Duke of Buccleuch.

North. Are you not afraid of losing it, my dear Shepherd?

Shepherd. Faith, there's nae fear o' that; for it has indented itsel intil my finger sae deep, that naebody can steal't frae me unless they saw or file't aff. It is indeed "a gem of purest ray serene;" and mony a mirk nicht hae I seen my way hame by its wee clear star o' lustre. The fairies ken't when they see't far aff twinkling through the mist, and the Shepherd hears the soun' o' their wings wavering roun' his head sae near, that he often thinks he could grup ane o' the creturs by her grass-green cymar. But the air-woven garment is impalpable to the touch; and, wi' sweet shrill laughter, the Aerials fade, chiming away outower the hills down by the towers o' Newark to holy Melrose, and the auld Abbey o' Dryburgh.

North. Oh why, my dearest James, why is thy mountain-lyre mute?

Shepherd. You're a bonny fellow to ask that question; you that's aye abusing poetry, and wunna leave ony ane o' a' the Nine Muses the likeness o' a dowg!

North. The sea of song hath its ebbs and flows; and now, methinks, there is a wide shore of sand.

Shepherd. Alang which you see, noo and then, a straggling poetaster picking up a few shells—mere buckies!

North. Sinking in treacherous quicksands,—or swallowed up when the flow of tide returns from the ocean.

Shepherd. I hae nae wush either to be drowned, or picked up by some critical cobble a' drookin wat, wi' sand in my

hair, and seaweed and barnacles stickin to my hurdies, like the keel o' a veshel wi' Sir Humphrey Davy's preservers against the dry-rot. Better to remain inland,—a silly shepherd piping to his flock.

North. I was glad to see some fine lines of yours, James, in Mr Watts' *Souvenir*.

Shepherd. Oh, sir, but yon's a bonny byuck! What for didna ye notice the Prent o' Martin's *Alexander and Diogenes?* That Martin, to my fancy, 's the greatest painter o' them a', and has a maist magnificent imagination. I'm nae great classical scholar; but aiblins I ken as muckle about Alexander the Great, his character and his conquests, as mony bred in a College. What a glorious gloom and glitter o' battlements hanging ower the crested head o' the Macedonian monarch, marching afore his body-guard, while a' the laigh distance is a forest o' spears and lances! And then Diogenes, like a tinkler at the door o' his bit blanket-tent, geein a lesson, which he was weel able to do, to the son o' Jupiter Ammon. The Tent's far better than a tub—for historical truth canna be said to be wranged, when it is sacrificed to the principles of a lofty art. A fountain playing close at hand in the shade—and the builder's and the sculptor's skill beautifying every quiet place with pensive images! My copy, wi' Mr Watts' respectful compliments, in large paper, wi' proof impressions; and I wadna sell't for five guineas, even although I had coft it mysel for twal shillings.

North. Jozey Hume would not scruple to sell, at a profit, a presentation-copy of a work of Sir Walter's.

Shepherd. Hoot, you sumph!—Beg pardon, sir,—Hoo do you think that a presentation-copy frae Sir Walter could ever get into such slippery hauns? But, gin ane could suppose sic a supposition, nae doubt Joe wadna be lang o' sellin't; for ye ken he doesna like to see interest on siller losing itsel, and it's very expensive keeping byucks lying idle, even although they dinna eat muckle in their shelfs. I wadna sell a presentation-copy o' the warst o' Sir Walter's warks, if it were to keep me and mine frae starvation.—When's his *Napoleon* to be out?

North. In a month or two,[1] I hear. It is a noble performance.

Shepherd. You dinna say that you've seen't.

[1] Scott's *Life of Napoleon* was published in June 1827.

North. Hem!—Mum, James. His other works are Tales; but this is a History, and a History worthy both the Men.

Shepherd. I canna doubt it. He's up to onything.—Oh, sir, but it's sickening to hear the anticipatory criticism o' the Whiglings on the *Life of Napoleon.* Wull Sir Walter, they ask, do justice to his character—wull he not show his politics? What for no?—Whan did he ever deny glory to a great man? Never.

North. Mere malice. Why, James, the Whigs used formerly to say, and even now they hint as much, that Wellington is not a great General. Neither is Scott a great Author.

Shepherd. I can thole a hantle o' nonsense—for I like to speak nonsense mysel—but heartless, malignant, envious nonsense, I never could thole; and were ony ass to point his ears with a bray at Sir Walter, in my sicht, or hearing, I would just get up, even if it was at a board o' oysters, when ODoherty was clearin a' before him, and kick the donkey down stairs.

North. Have you seen Allan Cunningham's[1] *Paul Jones?*

Shepherd. No me. It 'll no be verra gude.

North. What, James! Don't you think Allan a man of genius?

Shepherd. Yes, sir, I do think him a man of genius. But mayna a man of genius write a byuck that's no verra gude? Read ye ever a Romance ca'd the *Three Perils o' Man?*

North. Bravo, my dear Shepherd. *Paul Jones,* James, is an amusing, an interesting Tale, and will, on the whole, raise Allan's reputation. It is full of talent.

Shepherd. Let's hear it's chief merits first, and then its chief defects. They'll be geyan equally balanced, I jalouse.

North. Even so. There are many bold and striking incidents and situations; many picturesque and poetical descriptions; many reflections that prove Allan to be a man of an original, vigorous, and sagacious mind.

Shepherd. I dinna doubt it. Say away.

North. The character of Paul Jones is, I think, well conceived.

Shepherd. But is't weel executed? That's everything.

[1] Author of *Lives of British Painters,* and some very spirited poems. He was the secretary and foreman of Chantrey the sculptor. See *ante,* p. 204.

North. No, James, that's not everything. Much may be forgiven in imperfect execution to good conception. In bringing out his *idea* of Paul Jones, Allan has not always been successful. The delineation wants light and shade; there is frequent daubing—great—or rather gross exaggeration, and continual effort after effect, that sometimes totally defeats its purpose. On the whole, the interest we take in the Pirate is but languid. But the worst fault of the book is that it smells not of the ocean. There are waves—waves—waves—but never a sea,—battle on battle, but as of ships in a painted panorama, where we feel all is the mockery of imitation—and almost grudge our half-crown at each new ineffectual broadside and crash of music from a band borrowed from a caravan of wild beasts.

Shepherd. If I had said all that, you would have set it down to jealousy o' Kinnigham's genius.

North. It is evident that Allan never made a cruise in a frigate or line-of-battle ship. He dares not venture on nautical terms—and the land-lubber is in every line. Paul Jones's face is perpetually painted with blood and gunpowder, and his person spattered with brains. The description of the battle between the Shannon and the Chesapeake, in James's Naval History, is worth, ten thousand times over, all the descriptions in Allan's three volumes. Sadly inferior, indeed, is he to Mr Cooper, the truly naval author of the *Pilot*, who writes like a Hero.

Shepherd. As a tale of the sea, then, *Paul Jones* is a failure?

North. A most decided one. Still a bright genius like Allan's will show itself through darkest ignorance—and there are occasional flashes of war poetry in *Paul Jones*. But he manœuvres a Ship as if she were on wheels, and on dry land. All the glory of the power of sail and helm is gone—and the reader longs for an old number of *The Naval Chronicle*, for a Gazette letter from the Admiralty, from Lord Exmouth, or Lord Cochrane, or Sir Richard Strachan, or Keates, or Mylne, or Seymour, or Brisbane. But as I shall probably review Allan's book, you will see my opinion of its beauties and its deformities at great length in an early number. The article shall be a good one, depend on't—perhaps a leading one; for it is delightful to have to do with a man of genius; and our

readers will rise from its perusal with a far higher opinion of Allan's powers, than from any base and paid-for panegyric in any unprincipled Edinburgh radical newspaper, where the fear or the hope of a few advertisements withheld or bestowed, will prompt a panegyric fulsome as the smell of rankest ewes or nanny-goats, that, to the nostrils of a proud Peasant, like Allan Cunningham, must be sufficient, James, to make his stomach "just perfectly scunner." By the way, I cannot say, James, that I feel that disgust towards literary ladies that you used to express so strongly by that excellent word *scunner*. To my aged eyes a neat ankle is set off attractively by a slight shade of cerulean—and——

Shepherd. A nate ankil! Saw ye ever in a' your born days a nate ankil in a blue stockin? A' the leddies o' my acquaintance that write byucks hae gotten a touch o' the elephanteasis in their legs. If they grow thicker and thicker a' the way up, safe us! but they maun——

North. Stop, James. Some of our most justly popular female authors are very handsome women.

Shepherd. I'll just thank ye to name twa or three o' the handsomest—and I'll bet you what you like that I'se produce a lassie frae Yarrow or Ettrick, in worsted huggers,[1] that just kens her letters and nae mair, that'll measure sma'er roun' the ankils than your picked madam in the blue stockins, although she may hae written volumm upon volumm baith in prose and metre, and aiblins dedicated them, with a "Sire" in great big capitals, to his Majesty the King.

North. Stuff, James, stuff. Of all the huge, hulky, bulky, red, distempered ankles, that ever petrified my astonished gaze, the most hideous have I seen wading the tributary streams of the Tweed. In humble life, no such thing exists as a neat ankle.

Shepherd. Puir chiel, I pity you.

North. The term Literary Ladies (who, by the by, are charming Literary Souvenirs) is uniformly used by the dregs of both sexes—and only by the dregs. For my own part, I never yet felt or understood the full beauty of any pathetic passage in a poem, till I had heard it read, or recited, or breathed of by lady's lips—or wept or smiled over by lady's eyes—God bless them! They are celestial critics—and I

[1] *Huggers*—stockings without feet.

could often kiss the sweet creatures, so silvery sweet the music of their tongues! Believe it not, James—believe it not, James, that their ankles are ever one hair's-breadth in circumference more than he could wish them to be, when kneeling lover makes obeisance to their feet.

Shepherd. Weel, weel, then—I daursay I'm wrang. I'm wullin to believe, in spite o' the evidences of my senses, that the leddy I saw the day comin intil a circulation leebrary to ax for the Secrets o' Sensibility, in four volumes, had ankles nae thicker than my wrist-bane, although at the time I could hae taen my bible oath that they were about the thickness of my cawve.

North. Besides, James, it is altogether a mistake to think that thinness is necessarily neatness in an ankle. An ankle ought not on any account to be either thick or thin, but of a moderate roundness; any approach to the bony—or what you would call the "skranky," is death to my devoirs. Many elderly-young ladies are partial to short petticoats, on the score of their thin, bony, skranky ankles, which they stick out upon the public like sheep's trotters. Commend me, James, to a slim rotundity which long-fingered Jack could span—and scarcely span. Such an ankle, in the words of Burns, betrays fair proportion. The skranky ankle bespeaks skranky neck and bosom, James, and——

Shepherd. There's nae endurin them—I alloo that lassies should aye be something sonsie.

North. So with waists. Women are not wasps.

Shepherd. I'm no just quite sae sure about that, sir; but I agree wi' you in dislikin the wasp-waist. You wunner what they do wi' their vittals. They canna be healthy—and you'll generally observe, that siclike hae gey yellow faces, as if something were wrang wi' their stamach. There should be moderation in a' things. A waist's for puttin your arm round, and no for spannin wi' your hauns—except it be some fairy o' a cretur that's no made to be married, but just to wonder at, and aiblins admire, as you wud a bonny she-dwarf at a show. There should aye be some teer and weer about a lassie that's meant for domestic life.

North. With regard to dress, I am willing to allow considerable latitude. The bosom is the blessed seat of innocence as well as love.

Shepherd. That it is, Mr North ; and nae man that feels and thinks as a man, need pretend to be angry wi' a glimpse—na, wi' mair than a glimpse—o' a sicht that soothes the thoughts and feelings into a delightful cawm, and brings into his heart a silent bennison on the Virgin, whose wakin and sleepin dreams are a' as pure as the snaw-drift o' her heaving breast! It's nane but your sanctimonious sinners that gloom as they glower on such a heaven.

North. I often wish that there was not such uniformity in fashion. How much better if every maiden and every matron would dress according to her own peculiar taste and genius—each guiding herself, at the same time, by some understood Standard, from which there was to be no wide deviation. Thus we should have "variety in uniformity," "similitude in dissimilitude," which, according to Lord Shaftesbury and Mr Wordsworth, and a thousand others, is one of the prime principles of beauty.

Shepherd. That's a capital remark. Tak, for example, floonces. What's mair ridiculous than sax tier o' floonces on the tail o' the gown o' a bit fat, dumpy cretur, wi' unco[1] short legs, and stickin out geyan sair,[2] baith before and behin', beside a tall, straught, elegant lassie, wha bears alang her floonces as gloriously as the rising morning trails her clouds through amang the dews on the mountain-taps!

North. Poetry in every word.

Shepherd. Without sic paraphernalia, Dumpy micht hae been quite a Divinity. But the floonces gar you forget your gude manners, till you can scarce help laughing.

North. Oh, James, what a charm in appropriateness!

Shepherd. It's the same thing wi' men. Some look best in ticht[3] pantaloons—some in lowse troosers—some in knee-breeks—and some in kilts. Instead o' that, when tichts are the fashion, a' maun pit on tichts—and what a figure does yon body mak o' himsel in tichts, wi' legs and thees a' o' ae thickness, frae cute[4] to cleft, excep at the knees, which stick out on the insides wi' knots like neeps,[5] the verra hicht o' vulgarity in a drawing-room o' leddies.

North. O, for the restoration of the Roman Toga!

Shepherd. Then should the Shepherd appear in the character of a Roman Consul.

[1] *Unco*—uncommon.
[2] *Geyan sair*—somewhat immoderately.
[3] *Ticht*—tight.
[4] *Cute*—ankle.
[5] *Neeps*—turnips.

North. Hail, Cincinnatus—Cincinnatus, hail!

Shepherd. I thocht he had been a ploughman—no a shepherd.

North. Pray, James, do you think the pastoral preceded the agricultural state?

Shepherd. The horticultural preceded them baith—and that's the reason why I became a member o' the Horticultural Society, though it costs me twa guineas a-year. Now, there could be nae delvin without spades, and nae drillin without hows, and nae dibblin without dibbles—sae you see the agricultural state, as you ca't, naturally succeeded to the horticultural. Further, warna gardens made o' yirth? and what signifies it, in the pheelosophy o' the maitter, when the saft garden was changed for the hard glebe, as was the case, waes me—when the flaming sword drove our first parents—puir creturs—out o' the gates of Paradise! Therefore, strickly speakin, the first state o' man was agricultural.

North. John Millar, in his *Distinctions of Ranks*,[1] thought otherwise.

Shepherd. And wha's John Millar? Was he a brother o' Joe's? But to proceed wi' an answer to your question. The pastoral state grew out o' the agricultural, for when corn was raised, what was to become o' the straw? Cattle were collected and tamed, and fattened and ate. Further, think you that men wad hae been sic evendoun idiots as to have lived on cattle, without potawtoes and bread? Or on potawtoes and bread without cattle? They werena sic sumphs. Therefore, Cain was a ploughman—and Abel was a shepherd—just as Adam had been a gardener. And think you Eve and her daughters were long contented with fig-leaves?—no they indeed. Thus manufactures arose. As new families were begotten, villages and towns arose, and hence trade and commerce. So that horticulture was the original state—and thus the agricultural and the pastoral and the manufacturing and the commercial state arose contemporaneously, or nearly sae, a' round and about the bonny borders o' Paradise—for the borders were bonny, and weel watered wi' many large rivers, although the fiery sword o' the Angel o' the Lord often smote the soil wi' drought as with a curse—and——

[1] *The Origin of the Distinctions of Ranks.* By John Millar, Esq., Professor of Law in the University of Glasgow. Third edition: 1781.

North. But you have forgot the fishing and the hunting states.

Shepherd. I've dune nae sic thing—Come out to Altrive,[1] and you will see them baith in a' their pristine glory. But never tell me that a nation o' fishers ever turned into a nation o' hunters, or veece versa. Indeed I hae my doubts gin ever there was sic a thing as a nation o' fishers—except ye ca' twa or three hunder shiverin forlorn wretches on the shores o' Terra del Fuego, or ony ither siclike dreary and disconsolate shore, a nation—which would be a great abuse o' language. How the devil the human race ever got there, is no for me to say, nor you neither. But I gang no to John Millar, but to Moses, for my pheelosophy o' man and man's dispersion; and even supposing, for the sake o' theory and hippothesis, that the abeelities o' the twa writers were about upon a par, Moses, ye'll allow, had a great advantage, in leevin some thousans o' years nearer the time o' the creation than John Millar. Sae I shall continue to prefer his account to ony ither speculation sin' the invention o' prentin.

North. James, you are a good shot.

Shepherd. I seldom miss a haystack, or a barn-door, standing, at twenty yards; but war they to tak wings to themselves and flee away, I should be shy o' takin on ony big bet that I should bring them down — especially wi' a single barrel.

North. That thick brown octavo, lying by itself, immediately beyond the rizzered haddies, is one of the best and most business-like books on shooting that we sportsmen have: it is a fifth edition of my friend Colonel Hawker.

Shepherd. Commend me to an auld sodger for shootin. Let me put on my specks—ae sentence in a book 's quite aneuch to judge a' the lave by—and I see the Colonel's a clever fallow. Plates, too, Mr North; you maun just gie me a present o' this copy—and it will aye be ready for perusal when you come out to Altrive.

North. Take it, James.

Shepherd. Nane o' your pigeon-killers for me, waitin in cool blood till the bonny burdies, that should ne'er be shot at a', excep when they're on the corn-stooks, flee out o' a trap

[1] A small farm on the Yarrow, where Hogg resided after he left Mount Benger.

wi' a flutter and a whirr, and then prouder men are they nor the Duke o' Wellington, when they knock down, wi' pinions ower purple, the bright birds o' Venus, tumbling, as if hawk-struck, within boun's, or carrying aneath the down o' their bonny bosoms some cruel draps, that ere nightfall will gar them moan out their lives amang the cover o' suburban groves.

North. So you have no pity, James, for any other birds but the birds of Venus?

Shepherd. I canna say that I hae muckle pity for mony o' the ithers—mair especially wild-dyucks and whaups. It's a trial that Job would never hae come through, without swearin —after wading half the day through marsh and fen, sometimes up to the houghs, and sometimes to the oxters, to see a dizzen or a score o' wild-dyucks a' risin thegither, about a quarter o' a mile aff, wi' their outstretched bills and droopin doups, maist unmercifully ill-made, as ane might mistake it, for fleeing, and then makin a circle half a mile ayont the reach o' slug, gradually fa'in intil a mathematical figure in Euclid's Elements, and vanishin, wi' the speed o' aigles, in the weather-gleam,[1] as if they were aff for ever to Norway, or to the North Pole. Dang their web-footed soles——

North. James—James, remember where you are, and with whom—time, place, and person. No maledictions to-night on any part o' the creation, feathered or unfeathered. During Christmas holidays, I would rather err on the side of undue humanity. What are whaups?

Shepherd. That's a gude ane! Ma faith, you pruved that you kent weel aneuch what were whaups that day at Yarrow-Ford, when you devoored twa, stoop and roop,[2] to the astonishment o' the Tailor,[3] wha begood to fear that you would niest[4] eat his guse for a second coorse. The English ca' whaups curl-loos — the maist nonsensicalest name for a whaup ever I heard—but the English hae little or nae imagination.

North. My memory is not so good as it used to be, James —but I remember it now—"Most prime picking is the whaup."

Shepherd. In wunter they're aff to the sea — but a' simmer and hairst they haunt the wide, heathy, or rushy and boggy moors. Ye may discover the whaup's lang nose half a mile

[1] *Weather-gleam*—horizon. [2] *Stoop and roop*—stump and rump.
[3] The flying tailor of Ettrick, an eccentric character, celebrated for his agility. [4] *Niest*—next.

aff, as the gleg-eed cretur keeps a watch ower the wilderness, wi' baith sicht and smell.

North. Did you shoot the whaups alluded to above, James —or the Tailor himself?

Shepherd. Him—no me. But mony and aft's the time that I hae lain for hours ahint some auld turf-dyke, that aiblins had ance enclosed a bit bonny kailyard belanging to a housie noo soopt frae the face of the yearth,—every noo and than keekin ower the grassy rampart to see gif the whaups, thinkin themselves alane, were takin their walk in the solitude; and gif nane were there, layin mysel doun a' my length on my grufe[1] and elbow, and reading an auncient ballant, or maybe tryin to croon a bit sang o' my ain, inspired by the lown and lanesome spat, — for oh, sir! haena ye aften felt that the farther we are in body frae human dwellings, the nearer are we to their ingles in sowl?

North. Often, James—often. In a crowd I am apt to be sullen or ferocious. In solitude I am the most benevolent of men. To understand my character, you must see me alone—converse with me—meditate on what I then say—and behold my character in all its original brightness.

Shepherd. The dearest thocht and feelings o' auld lang syne come crowd—crowding back again into the heart whenever there's an hour o' perfect silence, just like so many swallows coming a-wing frae God knows where, when winter is ower and gane, to the self-same range o' auld clay biggins, aneath the thatch o' house, or the slate o' ha'—unforgetfu' they o' the place whare they were born, and first hunted the insect-people through shadow or sunshine!

North. What a pity, James, that you were not in Edinburgh in time to see my friend Audubon's Exhibition!

Shepherd. An Exhibition o' what?

North. Of birds painted to the life. Almost the whole American Ornithology, true to nature, as if the creatures were in their native haunts in the forests, or on the sea-shores. Not stiff and staring like stuffed specimens—but in every imaginable characteristic attitude, perched, wading, or a-wing, —not a feather, smooth or ruffled, out of its place,—every song, chirp, chatter, or cry, made audible by the power of genius.

Shepherd. Whare got he sae weel acquaint wi' a' the tribes —for do they not herd in swamps and woods whare man's

[1] *Grufe*—belly.

foot intrudes not—and the wilderness is guarded by the rattlesnake, fearsome watchman, wi' nae ither bouets [1] than his ain fiery eyne?

North. For upwards of twenty years the enthusiastic Audubon lived in the remotest woods, journeying to and fro on foot thousands of miles—or sailing on great rivers, "great as any seas," with his unerring rifle, slaughtering only to embalm his prey by an art of his own, in form and hue unchanged, unchangeable — and now, for the sum of one shilling, may anybody that chooses it, behold the images of almost all the splendid and gorgeous birds of that Continent.

Shepherd. Whare's the Exhibition now?

North. At Glasgow, I believe — where I have no doubt it will attract thousands of delighted spectators. I must get the friend who gave "A Glance over Selby's Ornithology," [2] to tell the world at large more of Audubon.[3] He is the greatest artist in his own walk that ever lived, and cannot fail to reap the reward of his genius and perseverance and adventurous zeal in his own beautiful branch of natural history, both in fame and fortune. The Man himself—whom I have had the pleasure of frequently meeting—is just what you would expect from his works, — full of fine enthusiasm and intelligence—most interesting in looks and manners—a perfect gentleman—and esteemed by all who know him for the simplicity and frankness of his nature. I wish you had seen him, James; you would have taken to each other very kindly, for you, James, are yourself a naturalist, although sometimes, it must be confessed, you deal a little in the miraculous, when biographically inclined about sheep, dogs, eagles, and salmon.

Shepherd. The ways o' the creatures o' the inferior creation, as we choose to ca' birds and beasts, are a' miraculous thegither—nor would they be less so if we understood better than we do their several instincts. Natural History is just anither name for Natural Theology—and the sang o' the laverock, and the plumage o' the goldfinch—do they not alike remind us o' God?

[1] *Bouet*—a hand-lanthorn.

[2] In *Blackwood's Magazine* for November 1826, written by Professor Wilson.

[3] *Audubon's Ornithological Biography* was reviewed by Professor Wilson in *Blackwood's Magazine* for July and August 1831.

North. I never knew a Naturalist who was not a good man. Buffon was a strange devil, but not a bad fellow on the whole —with all his vanity and sensualism. Cuvier is a most amiable character, and we need not go far from Edinburgh to find the best of men, and of Naturalists, united in one whom it is needless to name.[1]

Shepherd. That's a truth—What thin Folio's yon sprawling on the side-table?

North. Scenery, costume, and architecture, chiefly on the western side of India, by Captain Robert Melville Grindlay—a beautiful and a splendid work.—Just look at the frontispiece, James.

Shepherd. Eh, man! but she's a bonny Frontispiece, indeed! An Indian Maiden, orientally arrayed in a flowing garment, veil, shawl, plaid, gown, and trouser-lookin petticoats, all gracefully confused into one indistinguishable drapery, from dark-haired forehead down to ringed ankles and sma' naked feet! These pure, smooth, glossy, arms o' hers—hoo saftly and hoo sweetly wad they enfauld a lover stealing into them at gloamin, below the shadow o' these lofty Palm-Trees!

North. Turn over, James, and admire the shaking Minarets at Ahmedabad. It is the great Mosque erected by Sultan Ahmed early in the fifteenth century. His remains, with those of his family, are deposited within, in a splendid Mausoleum. The tombs are still covered, Captain Grindlay tells us, with rich tissues of silk and gold, surrounded with lamps continually burning, and guarded by Mahommedans of the religious orders, aided by innumerable devotees of the fair sex. It is, like all the other mosques and religious buildings of stone in the city and environs of Ahmedabad, ornamented with the most elaborate sculpture, and evidently copied from the remains of Hindoo architecture of very remote antiquity.

Shepherd. It is a splendid structure; and can naebody tell why the Minarets shake? But I canna get the image o' that Indian maiden out o' the ee o' my mind—let me look at her again. Oh! the bonny brown cretur, but she wad mak a pleasant companion in the way o' wife!

[1] James Wilson, Esq. of Woodville, near Edinburgh, brother of Professor Wilson, author of the article "Entomology" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "*Voyage Round Scotland*, 1842," &c., and one of the most scientific naturalists in Europe.

North. There, James, is an Ancient Temple at Malmud, on the Peninsula of Guzerat, which was the scene of the chief exploits, and finally of the death of Krishna, the Indian Apollo, and still contains architectural remains of the highest antiquity, and of extraordinary richness and beauty.

Shepherd. Od, it's sae lang sin' you were in India, I wonner hoo ye can remember so distinctly a' the architecture, and——

North. Captain Grindlay's admirable Representations bring back a thousand dreams to my mind. Beautiful Peninsula of Guzerat! True indeed it is, my dear Grindlay, that every hill is consecrated by some mythological event, and every stream has its poetical Name and classical Fiction.

Shepherd. There's no sic a Buildin's that in a' Embro'. The Register Office, forsooth!

North. Like the ancients, James, you see they adorn the Approach to their Cities with monumental buildings, from the splendid pillared dome of the chieftain, to the simple slab of the vassal, on which is sculptured the figure, on a horse or camel, or on foot, according to the circumstances under which the deceased met his fate. Intermingled with these warlike memorials, on the more affecting records of devotion, are the widows who have immolated themselves on the funeral piles of their lords, distinguished by a sculptured funeral Urn, ornamented with bracelets and amulets; and the number of this latter description proves the great and extensive prevalence of a practice which all the humane efforts of the British Court have hitherto failed to suppress.

Shepherd. Isna that a lassie in the foreground?

North. Yes, James, that mass of Masonry in the foreground is a Well, to which the female is descending by a flight of steps. These subterraneous reservoirs present, throughout Guzerat, some of the most splendid specimens of architecture, combining utility with unbounded riches of sculpture, and containing, in many instances, chambers and galleries for retreat during the oppressive heat of mid-day.

Shepherd. Confound me, ye auld cunning warlock, gin ye haena been readin a' this time ower my shouther frae Captain Grindlay's ain letterpress, and passin't aff as your ain description!

North. Why, James, your imagination has been so occupied

by that Oriental Damsel, that you never observed me putting on my Specks. I have been assuredly quoting the Captain, who writes as well as he draws. Pen, pencil, or sword, come alike to the hand of an accomplished British officer.

Shepherd. There maun be thousan's o' leebraries in Britain, private and public, that ought to hae sic a wark.

North. It must succeed.—But take care, James, that you don't soil it;—it shall have an article to itself soon. There, lay it down gently.

Shepherd. Whether had Mr Jeffrey or Mr Combe the best in that tussle about Phrenology, think ye, sir?[1]

North. Mr Jeffrey.—What a difference between the Men!—Now and then Mr Jeffrey laid himself open to knock-down blows; but Mr Combe, although he could not but see the opening and the unguarded part, knew not how to avail himself of the advantage given by his skilful, but occasionally unwary opponent. With open hand he sprawled on to the attack, administered punishment, and finally got knocked out of the ring, among acclamations justly raised to his conqueror.

Shepherd. What you say's just perfectly surprising; for the Phrenologers tell me that Combe did not leave Jeffrey a leg to stand on; and that the Science, as they ca't, noo stands like a Pyramid o' Egypt, wi' a broad base, and a apex pointing to the sky. I'm thinking ye'll be rather prejudiced,—a wee bigotted or sae,—and no a fit judge atween the twa combatants. Combe's a clever chiel—let me tell you that, sir.

North. And a very arrogant one too, else had he not flung back in Mr Jeffrey's face the compliment that gentleman rather unnecessarily paid to his talents.

Shepherd. Jeffrey was jokin!

North. Very like, James,—very like. I am a bit of a bigot, I confess. Most—indeed all men are so in one respect or another; but if Phrenology be a Fact in Nature, as Mr Combe and his adherents say—why—"Facts are chiels that wunna ding;"[2] and, with the exception of the high authorities cited by Mr Combe, all the way up to the Philosophical Editor of the *Chirurgical Journal*, down to the worthy Dundee mechanic,

[1] Jeffrey attacked Phrenology in a clever and humorous article in *The Edinburgh Review*, No. LXXXVIII., for Sept. 1826. Mr Combe published a rejoinder.

[2] *Wunna ding*—will not yield.

who procured, from the generosity of its author, a copy of *Combe's Phrenology* at the trade price, through the instrumentality of the guard of the Champion coach, mankind will look very foolish on the establishment of the Fact, and nobody will be able to hold up their heads but the Members of the various Phrenological Societies. Won't that be exceedingly hard, James?

Shepherd. Rather sae—but I'm determined to haud up my head, whether Phrenology's true or false. I ken a gude heap o' Phrenologers, but maist o' them's geyan stupid and wrang-headed;—no them a', but the greater feck o' them,—and I wadna just wish dunces to be discoverers.

North. The Phrenologers occupy a most distinguished rank as men of letters in Europe, James. I confess that to be "a Fact in Nature." Independently of their own science, they have produced many celebrated works on life, manners, morals, politics, and history.

Shepherd. What's their names?

North. Hark! the Calabrian harpers. Ring the bell, James, and we shall have them up-stairs for half an hour.

Shepherd (*rings*). Awmrose—Awmrose—bring my fiddle. I'll accompany the Calawbrians wi' voice and thairm.

XII.

(MARCH 1827.)

Scene,—Ambrose's Hotel, Picardy Place—Paper Parlour.

NORTH *and the* SHEPHERD.

North. How do you account, my dearest Shepherd, for the steadiness and perseverance of my affection for thee, seeing that I am naturally and artificially the most wayward, fickle, and capricious of all God's creatures? Not a friend but yourself, James, with whom I have not frequently and bitterly quarrelled, often to the utter extinction of mutual regard—but towards my incomprehensible Brownie my heart ever yearns——

Shepherd. Haud your leein tongue, ye tyke, you've quarrelled wi' me mony thousan' times, and I've borne at your hands mair ill-usage than I wad hae taen frae ony ither mortal man in his Majesty's dominions. Yet I weel believe that only the shears o' Fate will ever cut the cords o' our friendship. I fancy it's just the same wi' you as wi' me, we maun like ane anither whether we wull or no—and that's the sort o' freendship for me—for it flourishes, like a mountain flower, in all weathers—braid and bricht in the sunshine, and just faulded up a wee in the sleet, sae that it micht maist be thocht dead, but fu' o' life in its cozy bield[1] ahint the mossy stane, and peering out again in a' its beauty, at the sang o' the rising laverock.

North. This world's friendships, James——

Shepherd. Are as cheap as crockery, and as easily broken by a fa'. They seldom can bide a clash, without fleein intil flinders.[2] O, sir, but maist men's hearts, and women's too, are

[1] *Cozy bield*—snug shelter. [2] *Flinders*—shivers.

like toom nits[1]—nae kernel, and a splutter o' fushionless dust. I sometimes canna help thinkin that there's nae future state.

North. Fie, fie, James, leave all such dark scepticism to a Byron—it is unworthy of the Shepherd.

Shepherd. What for should sae mony puir, peevish, selfish, stupid, mean, and malignant creatures no just lie still in the mools among the ither worms, aneath their bits o' inscribed tomb-stones, aiblins railed in, and a' their nettles, wi' painted airn-rails, in a nook o' the kirkyard that's their ain property, and naebody's wushin to tak it frae them—What for, I say, shouldna they lie quate in skeleton for a thousand years, and then crummle, crummle, crummle awa intil the yearth o' which Time is made, and ne'er be reimmatterialeezed into Eternity?

North. This is not like your usual gracious and benign philosophy, James; but, believe me, my friend, that within the spirit of the most degraded wretch that ever grovelled earthward from caudle-day to corpse-day, there has been some slumbering spark divine, inextinguishable by the death-damps of the cemetery——

Shepherd. Gran' words, sir, gran' words, nae doubt, mair especially "cemetery," which I'm fond o' usin mysel, as often's the subject and the verse will alloo. But after a', is't mair poetical than the "Grave"? Deevil a bit. For a wee, short, simple, stiff, stern, dour, and fearsome word, commend me to the "Grave."

North. Let us change the channel of our discussion, James, if you please——

Shepherd. What! You're no feared for death, are you, sir?

North. I am.

Shepherd. So am I. There, only look at the cawnle[2] expiring—faint, feeble, flickering, and just like ane o' us puir mortal human creatures, sair, sair unwilling to die! Whare's the snuffers, that I may put it out o' pain. I'm tell't that twa folk die every minute, or rather every moment. Isna that fearsome to think o'?

North. Ay, James, children have been made orphans, and wives widows, since that wick began to fill the room with its funereal odour.

Shepherd. Nae man can manage snuffers richt, unless he hae been accustomed to them when he was young. In the Forest, we

[1] *Toom nits*—empty nuts. [2] *Cawnle*—candle.

a' use our fingers, or blaw the cawnles out wi' our mouths, or chap the brass sticks wi' the stinkin wicks again' the ribs—and gin there was a pair o' snuffers in the house, you might hunt for them through a' the closets and presses for a fortnight, without their ever castin up.

North. I hear that you intend to light up Mount Benger with gas, James. Is that a true bill?

Shepherd. I had thochts o't—but the gasometer, I find, comes ower high—so I shall stick to the "Lang Twas." O man, noo that the cawnle's out, isna that fire unco heartsome? Your face, sir, looks just perfeckly ruddy in the bleeze, and it wad tak a pair o' poorfu' specks to spy out a single wrinkle. You'll leeve yet for ither twa hundred Numbers.

North. And then, my dear Shepherd, the editorship shall be thine.

Shepherd. Na. When you're dead, Maga will be dead. She'll no surveeve you ae single day. Buried shall you be in ae grave, and curst be he that disturbs your banes! Afore you and her cam out, this wasna the same warld it has been sin' syne. Wut and wisdom never used to be seen linkin alang thegither, han'-in-han' as they are noo, frae ae end o' the month to the ither;—there wasna prented a byuck that garred ye break out at ae page into grief, and at anither into a guffaw;—where could ye forgather wi'[1] sic a canty[2] crew o' chiels as ODoherty and the rest, passin themselves aff sometimes for real, and sometimes for fictious characters, till the puzzled public glowered as if they had flung the glamour ower her?—and oh, sir, afore you brak out, beautiful as had been many thousan' thousan' million, billion, trillion and quadrillion nights by firesides in huts or ha's, or out-by in the open air wi' the starry heavens resting on the saft hill-taps, yet a' the time that the heavenly bodies were performing their stated revolutions—there were nae, nae Noctes Ambrosianæ!

North. I have not, I would fain hope, my dear James, been altogether useless in my generation—but your partiality exaggerates my merits——

Shepherd. A man would require an oss magna sonaturum to do that. Suffice it to say, sir, that you are the wisest and wittiest of men. Dinna turn awa your face, or you'll get a

[1] *Forgather wi'*—fall in with. [2] *Canty*—lively.

crick in your neck. There's no sic a popular man in a' Britain the noo as Christopher North. Oh, sir, you'll dee as rich as Crœsus—for every day there's wulls makin by auld leddies and young leddies, leaving you their residiatory legatee, sometimes, I fear, past the heirs, male or female, o' their bodies lawfully begotten.

North. No, James, I trust that none of my admirers, since admirers you say the old man hath, will ever prove so unprincipled as to leave their money away from their own kin. Nothing can justify that—but hopeless and incurable vice in the natural heirs.

Shepherd. I wush I was worth just twenty thousan' pounds. I could leeve on that—but no on a farden less. In the first place, I would buy three or four pair o' tap-boots—and I would try to introduce into the Forest buckskin breeks. I would niest, sin' naebody's gien me ane in a present, buy a gold musical snuff-box, that would play tunes on the table.

North. Heavens! James—at that rate you would be a ruined man before the coming of Christmas. You would see your name honourably mentioned in the Gazette.

Shepherd. Then a gold twisted watch-chain, sax gold seals o' various sizes, frae the bigness o' my nieve amaist, doun to that o' a kitty-wren's egg.

North. Which ODoherty would chouse you out of at brag, some night at his own lodgings, after the play.

Shepherd. Catch me at the cairds, unless it be a game at Birky;[1] for I'm sick o' Whust itsel, I've sic desperate bad hauns dealt to me noo—no an ace ance in a month, and no that unseldom a haun without a face-caird, made up o' deuces, and trays, and fours, and fives, and be damned to them; so that to tak the verra weakest trick is entirely out o' my power, except it be by main force, harling the cairds to me whether the opposite side wull or no; and then at the close o' the round, threepin[2] that I had twa honours—the knave and anither ane. Sic bad luck hae I in a' chance games, Mr North, as you ken, that were I to fling dice for my life alang wi' a haill army o' fifty thousand men, I wad be sure to be shot; for I would fling aces after some puir trumlin drummer had flung deuces, and be led out into the middle o' a hollow square for execution.

[1] *Anglicè*, Beggar-my-neighbour. [2] *Threepin*—asserting pertinaciously.

North. James, you are very excursive this evening in your conversation—nobody is thinking of shooting you, James.

Shepherd. And I'm sure that I hae nae thochts o' shootin mysel. But ance—it's a lang time syne—I saw a sodger shot—dead, sir, as a door-nail, or a coffin-nail, or ony ither kind o' nail.

North. Was it in battle, James ?

Shepherd. In battle ?—Na, na; neither you nor me was ever fond o' being in battle at ony time o' our lives.

North. I was Private Secretary to Rodney when he beat Langara,[1] James.

Shepherd. Haud your tongue !—What a crowd on the Links[2] that day ! But a' wi' fixed whitish faces—nae speakin—no sae muckle as a whisper—a frozen dumbness that nae wecht[3] could break !

North. You mean the spectators, James.

Shepherd. Then the airmy appeared in the distance; for there were three haill regiments, a' wi' fixed beggonets; but nae music—nae music for a while at least, till a' at ance, mercy on us ! we heard, like laigh sullen thunder, the soun' o' the great muffled drum, aye played on, ye ken, by a black man; in this case, an African neegger, sax feet four; and what bangs he gied the bass—the whites o' his een rowin about as if he was glad, atween every stroke !

North. I remember him—the best pugilist then going, for it was long before the days of Richmond and Molineaux—and nearer forty than thirty years ago, James.

Shepherd. The tread of the troops was like the step o' ae giant—sae perfate was their discippleen—and afore I weel kent that they were a' in the Links, three sides o' a square were formed—and the soun' o' the great drum ceased, as at an inaudible word of command, or wavin o' a haun, or the lowerin o' a banner. It was but ae man that was about to die—but for that ae man, had their awe no hindered them, twenty thousan' folk wad at that moment hae broken out into lamentations and rueful cries—but as yet not a tear was shed —not a sigh was heaved—for had a' that vast crowd been sae mony images, or corpses raised up by cantrip in their death-claes, they couldna hae been mair motionless than at that

[1] Off Cape St Vincent, on the 16th of January 1780.

[2] *Links*—downs. [3] *Wecht*—weight.

minute, nor mair speechless than that multitude o' leevin souls!

North. I was myself one of the multitude, James.

Shepherd. There, a' at ance, hoo or whare he came frae nane could tell—there, I say, a' at ance stood the Mutineer. Some tell't me afterwards that they had seen him marchin along, twa-three yards ahint his coffin, wi' his head just a wee thocht inclined downwards, not in fear o' man or death, but in awe o' God and judgment, keepin time wi' a military step that was natural to him, and no unbecoming a brave man on the way to the grave, and his een fixed on the green that was fadin awa for ever and ever frae aneath his feet; but that was a sicht I saw not—for the first time I beheld him he was standin, a' unlike the ither men, in the middle o' that three-sided square, and there was a shudder through the haill multitude, just as if we had been a' standin haun in haun, and a natural philosopher had gien us a shock o' his electrical machine. "That's him—that's him—puir, puir fallow! Oh! but he's a pretty man!"—Such were the ejaculations frae thousan's o' women, maist o' them young anes, but some o' them auld, and grey-headed aneath their mutches, and no a few wi' babies sookin or caterwailin at their breasts.

North. A pretty girl fainted within half-a-dozen yards of where I stood.

Shepherd. His name was Lewis Mackenzie—and as fine a young man he was as ever stepped on heather. The moment before he knelt down on his coffin, he seemed as fu' o' life as if he had stripped aff his jacket for a game at foot-ba', or to fling the hammer. Ay, weel micht the women-folk gaze on him wi' red weeping een, for he had lo'ed them but ower weel; and mony a time, it is said, had he let himsel down the Castle-rock at night, God knows hoo, to meet his lemans—but a' that, a' his sins, and a' his crimes acted and only meditated, were at an end noo—puir fallow—and the platoon, wi' fixed beggonets, were drawn up within ten yards, or less, o' where he stood, and he himsel havin tied a handkerchief ower his een, dropped down on his knees on his coffin, wi' faulded hands, and lips moving fast, fast, and white as ashes, in prayer!

North. Cursed be the inexorable justice of military law!—he might have been pardoned.

Shepherd. Pardoned! Hadna he disarmed his ain captain o' his sword, and ran him through the shouther—in a mutiny of which he was himsel the ringleader? King George on the throne durstna hae pardoned him—it wad hae been as much as his crown was worth—for hoo could King, Kintra, and Constitution thole a standing army, in which mutiny was not punished wi' death?

North. Six balls pierced him—through head and heart—and what a shriek, James, then arose!

Shepherd. Ay, to hae heard that shriek, you wad hae thought that the women that raised it wad never hae lauched again; but in a few hours, as sune as nightfall darkened the city, some o' them were gossipin about the shootin o' the sodger to their neighbours, some dancin at hops that shall be nameless, some sittin on their sweethearts' knees wi' their arms roun' their necks, some swearin like troopers, some doubtless sittin thochtfu' by the fireside, or awa to bed in sadness an hour sooner than usual, and then fast asleep.

North. I saw his old father, James, with my own eyes, step out from the crowd, and way being made for him, he walked up to his son's dead body, and embracing it, kissed his bloody head, and then with clasped hands looked up to heaven.

Shepherd. A strang and stately auld man, and ane too that had been a soldier in his youth. Sorrow, not shame, somewhat bowed his head, and ance he reeled as if he were faint on a sudden.—But what the deevil's the use o' me haverin awa this way aboot the shootin o' a sodger, thretty years sin' syne, and mair too—for didna I see that auld silvery-headed father o' the mutineer staggering alang the Grassmarket, the verra next day after the execution, as fou as the Baltic, wi' a heap o' mischievous weans hallooin after him, and him a' the while in a dwam o' drink and despair, maunderin about his son Lewis, then lyin a' barken'd wi' blood in his coffin, six feet deep in a fine rich loam.

North. That very same afternoon I heard the drums and fifes of a recruiting party, belonging to the same regiment, winding away down towards Holyrood; and the place of Lewis Mackenzie, in the line of bold sergeants with their claymores, was supplied by a corporal, promoted to a triple bar on his sleeve, in consequence of the death of the mutineer.

Shepherd. It was an awfu' scene, yon, sir; but there was

naething humiliating to human nature in it,—as in a hangin; and it struck a wholesome fear into the souls o' many thousan' sodgers.

North. The silence and order of the troops, all the while, was sublime.

Shepherd. It was sae, indeed.

North. What do you think, James, of that, by way of a toasting cheese? Ambrose calls it the Welshman's delight, or Davies' darling.

Shepherd. It's rather teuch—luk, luk, hoo it pu's out, out, out, and better out, into a very thread o' the unbeaten gold, a' the way frae the ashet to my mouth. Saw ye ever onything sae tenawcious? I verily believe that I could walk, without breakin't, intil the tither room. Luk hoo it shines, like a gossamer-filament, a' threaded wi' what Allan Kinnigham would ca' dew-blobs, stretching across frae ae sweet-briar bush to anither, and breaking afore the step o' the early lassie tripping down the brae, to wash her bonny face, yet smiling wi' the glimmerin licht o' love-dreams, in the bit burnie that wimples awa as pure and stainless as her ain virgin life!

North. Sentiment — divine sentiment, extracted by the alchemy of genius from a Welsh-rabbit!

Shepherd. Noo that I've gotten't intil my mouth—I wush it ever may be gotten out again! The tae[1] end o' the line is fastened, like a hard gedd[2] (See Dr Jamieson) in the ashet—and the ither end's in my stammach—and the thin thread o' attenuated cheese gets atween my teeth, sae that I canna chow't through and through. Thank ye sir, for cuttin't. Rax me ower the jug. Is't yill? Here's to you, sir.

North. Peebles ale, James. It has a twang of the Tweed.

Shepherd. Tweed! Do you ken, Mr North, that last simmer[3] the Tweed ran dry, and has never flowed sin' syne. They're speakin o' takin doun a' the brigs frae Erickstane to Berwick, and changing the channel intil the turnpike road. A' the materials are at haun, and it's a' to be macadameezed.

North. The Steam-Engine Mail-Coach is to run that road in spring.

Shepherd. Is't? She'll be a dangerous vehicle—but I'll tak my place in the safety-valve. But jeestin apairt, do you

[1] *Tae*—one. [2] *Gedd*—a pikestaff stuck into the ground.

[3] The summer of 1826 was memorable for its drought.

ken, sir, that mony and mony a wee well among the hills and mountains was really dried up by the drought o' three dry simmers—and for them my heart was wae, as if they had been ance leevin things! For werena they like leevin things, aye sae calm, and clear, and bright, and sae contented, ilka ane by itsel, in far-awa spats, whare the grass runkled only to the shepherd's foot twa-three times a-year, and a' the rest o' the sun's annual visit roun' the globe lay touched only by the wandering light and shadows!

North. Poo—poo—James—there's plenty of water in the world without them.

Shepherd. Plenty o' water in the world without them? Ay, that there is, and mair than plenty—but what's that to the purpose, ye auld haverel? Gin five thousan' bonny bairns were to be mawn doun by the scythe o' Death during the time that I'm drinking this glass—(oh man, but this is a grand jug, aiblins rather ower sweet, and rather ower strong, but that's twa gude fauts)—there wad be plenty o' bairns left in the warld, legitimate and illegitimate—and you nor me micht never miss them. But wadna there be just sae much extinguishment, or annihilation like, o' beauty and bliss, o' licht and lauchter, o' ray-like ringlets, and lips that war nae sweeter, for naething can be sweeter, than the half-opened buds o' moss-roses, when the morning is puttin on her claes, but lips that were just as sweet when openin and shuttin in their balmy breath, when ilka happy bairn was singing a ballant or a psalm, baith alike pious and baith alike pensive; for a' the airs o' Scotland (excep a gey hantle, to be sure, o' wicket tunes), soun' aye to me mair melancholy than mirthfu', spirit-like, and as if of heavenly origin, like the bit lown musical soun's that go echoing by the ear, or rather the verra soul o' the shepherd leaning on his staff at nicht, when a' the earth is at rest, and lookin up, and ower, and through into the verra heart o' Heaven, when the lift is a' ae glorious glitter o' cloudless stars! You're no sleepy, sir?

North. Sleepy! You may as well ask the leader in a tandem if he be sleepy, when performing the match of twenty-eight miles in two hours, without a break.

Shepherd. Ae spring there is—in a nook known but to me and anither, a bit nook greener than ony emerald—or even the Queen Fairy's symar, as she disentangles it frae her feet

in the moonlight dance, enclosed wi' laigh broomy rocks, amaist like a sheep-fauld, but at the upper end made lown in a' weathers by ae single stane, like the last ruin o' a tower, smelling sweet, nae doubt, at this blessed moment, wi' thyme that enlivens even the winter season,—ae spring there is—I say—

North. Dear me! James—let me loosen your neckcloth—you are getting black in the face. What sort of a knot is this? It would puzzle the ghost of Gordius to untie it.

Shepherd. Dinna mind the crauvat. I say, Mr North, rather were my heart dried up to the last drop o' bluid, than that the pulses of that spring should cease to beat in the holy wilderness.

North. Your emotion is contagious, James. I feel the rheum bedimming my aged eyes, albeit unused to the melting mood.

Shepherd. You've heard me tell the tale afore—and it's no a tale I tell when I can help it—but sometimes, as at present, when sittin wi' the friend I love, and respect and venerate, especially if, like you, he be maist like a father, or at least an elder brither, the past comes upon me wi' a' the power o' the present, and though my heart be sair, ay, sair maist to the verra breakin, yet I maun speak—for though big and great griefs are dumb, griefs there are, rather piteous and profound, that will shape themselves into words, even when nane are by to hear, nane but the puir silly echoes that can only blab the twa-three last syllables o' a secret!

North. To look on you, James, an ordinary observer would think that you had never had any serious trials in this life—that Doric laugh of thine, my dear Shepherd——

Shepherd. I hate and despise ordinary observers; and thank God that they can ken naething o' me or my character. The pitifu' creturs aye admire a man wi' a lang nose, hollow cheeks, black een, swarthy cheeks, and creeshy hair; and tauk to ane anither about his interesting melancholy, and severe misfortunes; and hoo he had his heart weel-nigh broken by the death o' twa wives, and the loss o' a third evangelical miss, wha eloped, after her wedding-claes had been taen aff at the haberdasher's, wi' a playactor wha had ance been a gentleman—that is, attached to the commissaw-

riat department o' the army in the Peninsula, a dealer in adulterated flour and mule-flesh sausages.

North. Interesting emigrants to Van Diemen's Land.

Shepherd. A man wi' buck-teeth and a cockit nose, like me, they'll no alloo to be a martyr to melancholy; but because they see and hear me lauchin as in Peter's Letters,[1] scoot the idea o' my ever geein way to grief, and afttimes thinkin the sweet light o' heaven's blessed sunshine darkened by a black veil that flings a correspondin shadow ower the seemingly disconsolate yearth.

North. Most of the good poets of my acquaintance have light-coloured hair.

Shepherd. Mine in my youth was o' a bricht yellow.

North. And a fine animal you were, James, I am told, as you walked up the transe o' the kirk, with your mane flying over your shoulders, confined within graceful liberty by a blue ribbon, the love-gift of some bonny May, that wonned amang the braes, and had yielded you the parting kiss, just as the cottage clock told that now another week was past, and you heard the innocent creature's heart beating in the hush o' the Sabbath morn.

Shepherd. Whisht, whisht!

North. But we have forgotten the Tale of the Haunted Well.

Shepherd. It's nae Tale—for there's naething that could be ca'd an incident in a' that I could say about that well! Oh! sir—she was only twa months mair than fifteen—and though she had haply reached her full stature, and was somewhat taller than the maist o' our Forest lassies, yet you saw at ance that she was still but a bairn. Her breast, white, and warm, and saft, and fragrant as the lily, whose leaves in the driest weather you'll never find without an inklin o' Heaven's dew, no perhaps what you would ca' a dew-drap, but a balmy freshness, that ever breathes o' delight in being alive beneath the fair skies, and on this fair planet, the greenest sure by far o' the seven that dance around the sun!

North. Too poetical, James, for real feeling.

Shepherd. Wha that ever saw—wha that ever touched that

[1] *Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk*, 1819. These lively sketches of Edinburgh society and its celebrities, were from the pen and the pencil of Mr Lockhart.

breast, would not hae been made a poet by the momentary bliss! Yet, as God is my judge, her mother's hand busked not that maiden's bosom wi' mair holy love than did I place within it, mony and mony a time, the yellow primroses and the blue violets, baith o' them wi' but single leaves, as you ken, amang the braes, but baith alike bonnier far—oh—bonnier, bonnier far when sometimes scarcely to be seen at all atween the movings o' her breast, that when she and I pu'd them frae amang the moss and tufts o' lang grass, whisperin saft and dreamlike thochts, as the hill-breezes went by on a sudden, and then a' was again as lown as death.

North. My dear Theocritus——

Shepherd. Whisht. I was a hantle aulder than her—and as she had nae brither—I was a brither to her—neither had she a father or mither, and ance on a day, when I said to her that she wad find baith in me, wha loved her for her goodness and her innocence, the puir britherless, sisterless, parentless orphan, had her face a' in ae single instant as drenched in tears, as a flower cast up on the sand at the turn o' a stream that has brought it down in a spate frae the far-aff hills.

North. Her soul, James, is now in Heaven!

Shepherd. The simmer afore she died, she didna use to come o' her ain accord, and, without being asked in aneath my plaid, when a skirring shower gaed by—I had to wise[1] her in within its faulds—and her head had to be held down by an affectionate pressure, almost like a faint force, on my breast—and when I spak to her, half in earnest half in jest, o' love, she had nae heart to lauch,—sae muckle as to greet! As sure as God's in heaven, the fair orphan wept.

North. One so happy and so innocent might well shed tears.

Shepherd. There, beside that wee, still, solitary well, have we sat for hours that were swift as moments, and yet each o' them filled fu' o' happiness that wad noo be aneuch for years!

North. For us, and men like us, James, there is on earth no such thing as happiness. Enough that we have known it.

Shepherd. I should fear noo to face sic happiness as used to be there, beside that well—sic happiness would noo turn my brain—but nae fear, nae fear o' its ever returnin, for that voice went wavering awa up to heaven from this mute earth, and

[1] *Wise*—entice.

on the nicht when it was heard not, and never more was to be heard, in the psalm, in my father's house, I knew that a great change had been wrought within me, and that this earth, this world, this life was disenchanted for ever, and the place that held her grave a Paradise no more!

North. A fitter place of burial for such an one is not on the earth's surface, than that lone hill kirkyard, where she hath for years been sleeping.[1] The birch shrub in the south corner will now be quite a stately tree.

Shepherd. I visit the place sae regularly every May-day in the morning, every Midsummer-day, the langest day in the year, that is, the twenty-second o' June, in the gloaming, that I see little or nae alteration on the spat, or onything that belangs to it. But nae doubt, we are baith grown aulder thegither; it in that solitary region, visited by few or none—except when there is a burial—and me sometimes at Mount Benger, and sometimes in here at Embro', enjoyin mysel at Ambrose's—for, after a', the world's no a bad world, although Mary Morison be dead—dead and buried thirty years ago, and that's a lang portion o' a man's life, which is, scripturally speakin, somewhere about threescore and ten.

North. Look here, my dear James, don't say that you have not as exquisite a perception of beauty, and all that sort of thing, now, as thirty years ago. There, my man, there is the Paphian Bower, composed by Phillips, from a picture by Martin; saw ye ever anything more perfectly lovely?

Shepherd. Never since the day I was born. Dinna tell me wha thae Three Female Figures are—for it's a' ane whether they be the Three Muses, or Three o' the Nine Graces, or Venus and twa o' her handmaids, or ony ither Three o' God's fairest creatures, for whom that wee, winged, kneeling Cupid is pluckin flowers for them to wreathe round their heavenly

[1] This lonely churchyard, on the shore of St Mary's Loch, is thus described by Scott:—

> "Nought living meets the eye or ear,
> But well I ween the dead are near;
> For though, in feudal strife, a foe
> Hath laid Our Lady's chapel low,
> Yet still, beneath the hallow'd soil,
> The peasant rests him from his toil,
> And, dying, bids his bones be laid
> Where erst his simple fathers prayed."
>
> *Marmion*, Introd. to Canto II.

hair; dinna tell me what they're doin, hae been doin, or are gaun to do, for it's delightfu' for the imagination to sink awa into its ain dreams amang thae lang withdrawing glades, and outower the wood-taps, if sae ane feel inclined, to flee awa to yonder distant hills, and from their pinnacles to take a flight up to yon pavilion-clouds, and lay a body's sel doon at full length on the yielding saftness!

North. Look at Her with the frame-enveloping veil, James, and wish yourself a Pagan of the olden time, James, when mortals loved immortals, and Venus herself did not disdain to meet the Shepherd——

Shepherd. As sure's I'm leevin there's the same three Goddesses, and the same bit Cupid, standin on their heads in the water amang the floating lilies!

North. Martin has a soul both for beauty and grandeur.

Shepherd. He has that—and it's a wonderfu' thing to think that the same genius that saw yon sublime vision o' Belshazzar's Feast, an endless perspective o' Babylonian buildings, should delight to wanton thus with Nature in her prime—for were it no for the pillared roof o' that palace peering aboon the tree-taps, ane micht believe themselves in ane o' the woodland and waterland glades o' Paradise!

North. I don't think, James, that you do much nowadays with the pencil?

Shepherd. No me. I've gien ower the paintin noo a'thegither—for I canna please mysel in the execution. But it's a fine art—and I'm geein lessons to my callant[1]——

North. Right, James. Of all the accomplishments of a gentleman, I do not know one superior to that of being a good draughtsman. He who can use his pen and his pencil can seldom or never be at a loss in this world. One half the time often lost in learning to play the beautiful but pernicious game of billiards, would be sufficient to give a youth mastery over that other elegant and useful art. Yet how few gentlemen can draw or paint well!

Shepherd. Sketchers are geyan apt, howsomever, to be wearisome wi' their critical cant, and even to talk o' Nature hersel, as if she were only worth studying for the sake o' art.

North. Very true, James. There was a painter, some twenty years ago, of the name of Havel—dead now I suppose

[1] *i. e.*, "Wee Jamie." See *ante*, p. 175, note.

—who really painted with some spirit and splendour. He was all an' all with an amateur friend of mine; and I remember once contemplating a glorious sunset among mountains with the said amateur friend, when after a "syncope and solemn pause," he exclaimed to himself in soliloquy, "Havel all over! Havel all over!" He complimented the sunset, James, Nature's own midsummer-sunset, at the close of a thunderous day, James, by likening it to, or rather identifying it with, a bit of oiled canvass run over by the brush of a clever Cockney!

Shepherd. That beats a', and is a capital illustration o' my meaning. Sketchers 'll often no alloo the sun to set in his ain way, nor a mountain to haud up his head as he chooses, without takin baith the ane and the ither to task for their clumsiness or awkward demeanour. The sea wide-rolling in his verdant lustre, or a' a-foam wi' fury, that daunts not, however, the wing-tips o' the bonny creturs the sea-maws, that think naething o' floating on and awa, Willie, on waves that seem big and fierce aneuch to dash a veshel again' the rocks—Sketchers, I was gaun to say, 'll criticise the old sea, without ony o' that reverential awe o' which Wudsworth so finely speaks—fin' faut wi' him for no being black aneuch here, and white aneuch there, and purple aneuch yonner, and green aneuch ower ayont, and yellow aneuch where the sunlight smites, and red aneuch whare the lightning shivers the mast o' the ship skuddin under bare poles, wi' ten thousand million o' white-maned waves pursuing her, as if gaping and roaring for their prey.

North. You poets are just as bad as painters.

Shepherd. That's a lee, sir; for we poets deal in general sketches o' Nature—and alloo her great latitude in a' her conduct wi' the elements. We do not tie her down, like the painters, to ony set rules o' behaviour, sae that she but behave like hersel; and we defy her to come wrang ony hour, or in ony mood, before our spirits, provided only she binna wrapt up a'thegither in a vile, cauld, nizzling, mizzling, drizzling Scotch mist, that utterly obliterates the creation, and reduces it to warse than Naething.

North. Have you been at the Exhibition, James, this season?

Shepherd. The Directors didna open't, till they knew I had come to town, and they presented me wi' a perpetual ticket, that'll answer for a' this century. Let's hear your opinion,

Mr North. Speak out, man, and dinna be feared for me, for I'll mak allooance for your never having studied the airts o' paintin and poetry, as I hae done; and you'll be keepit frae ganging verra far wrang in your judgment by your ain natural taste and genius.

North. Landscape or Portrait?

Shepherd. Portrait—for I canna let you think o' takin the landscapes out o' my ain haun—Wha's best in the line o' portraits?

North. Need you ask?—John Watson Gordon. In three years more—if he goes on thus—he will be equal to Raeburn. Indeed, Raeburn himself, although the greatest portrait-painter Scotland ever produced, never painted, at John Watson's age, a better picture than that artist's "Dr Hunter."[1]

Shepherd. It's no in this Exhibition, is't?

North. No—but Lady——

Shepherd. Ay—that is a maist beautiful wark o' airt. Sae composed and dignified that leddy sits—yet without ony tincture o' pride; for what's rank to them that hae rank? They never think about it. It's only your upstart madams that haud their heads heich and haughty.

North. I have not seen any portrait of you, James, in any late Exhibition?

Shepherd. Nor me o' you, sir. What for doesna Watson Gordon immortaleeze himsel by paintin a Portrait o' Christopher North?[2] But oh, sir! but you hae gotten a kittle face—your een's sae changefu' in their gleg expression, and that mouth o' yours takes fifty shapes and hues every minute, while, as for your broos, they're noo as smooth as those o' a lassie, and noo as frownin as the broos o' a Saracen's head.

North. There is nothing uncommon in my face, James?

Shepherd. Oh, sir, you hae indeed a kittle kittle face, and to do it justice it should be painted in a Series. Ane micht ken something o' your physiognomy in the coorse o' a Gallery.

North. "The Stirrup-Cup," painted by James Stewart the engraver, is exceedingly clever and characteristic. I have not seen an old gentleman enjoy a caulker more intensely since the peep I had a few minutes ago of myself in that glass,

[1] See *ante*, p. 143, note 2.

[2] The best portrait extant of Professor Wilson was painted by Sir John Watson Gordon, in 1850, for Mr John Blackwood, in whose possession it now is.

when turning up my little finger to Ambrose's incomparable Glenlivet.

Shepherd. The powney, too, seems unwilling to start—no that he's sorry to return hame ony mair than his maister; but somehow or ither the ribs o' the rack fitted the nose o' him unco snugly, and the aits[1] were o' a peculiarly fine flavour. The laird's man, too, looks as if he wad fain hae anither hour's conversation wi' that yellow-haired lassie, that's geein him a partin keek frae ahint the door-cheek; "but fare thee well, and if for ever, still for ever fare thee well!" sighs out Jock, till the bubbles floatin o'er the brimmin quaich disappear like a vapour.

North. Now, James, that you have permitted me at such great length, and without any interruption, to describe to you the merits of many of the best portraits, let us have your opinion of the landscapes.

Shepherd. That young chiel Gibb[2] hits aff a simple scene o' nature to the nines[3]—a bit dub o' water, aiblins—a foot-path —a tree—a knowe—a coo, and a bairn; yet out o' sic slender materials, the chiel contrives to gie a character to the place in a way that proves him to hae the gift o' genius.

North. Mr Thomson of Duddingston[4] is the best landscape-painter in Scotland. The man's a poet.

Shepherd. I dinna like that picture o' his at a' o' Loch Catrine frae the Gobblin's Cave. The foreground is too broken, spotty, confused, and huddled—and what is worst of all, it wants character. The chasm doun yonner, too, is no half profound aneuch, and inspires neither awe nor wonder. The lake itself is lost in its insignificance, and the distant mountains are fairly beaten by the foreground, and hardly able to haud up their heads.

North. There is truth in much of what you say, James—but still the picture is a magnificent one.

Shepherd. I wadna gie the Bass Rock for a dizzen o't. You may weel ca't a magnificent ane—and I wad wish, in sic weather, to be ane o' the mony thousan' sea-birds that keep wheeling unwearied in the wind, and ever and anon cast anchor in the clifts. Still, solitary, and sublime—a

[1] *Aits*—oats.

[2] This promising artist died young.

[3] *To the nines* must mean "to the purpose;" but what authority there is for the expression I know not.

[4] See *ante*, p. 69, note 1.

sea-piece, indeed, worthy of being hung up in the Temple o' Neptune.

North. Kinbane Castle is just as good—and Torthorwald Castle, Dumfriesshire, is the best illustration I ever saw of Gray's two fine lines—

> " Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
> And all the air a solemn stillness holds."

Shepherd. Mr Thomson gives me the notion o' a man that had loved natur afore he had studied art—loved her and kent her weel, and been let intil her secrets, when nane were by but their twa sels, in neuks where the wimplin burnie plays, in open spats within the woods where you see naething but stems o' trees—stems o' trees—and a flicker o' broken light interspersing itsel among the shadowy branches,—or without ony concealment, in the middle o' some wide black moss—like the moor o' Rannoch—as still as the shipless sea, when the winds are weary—and at nightfall in the weather-gleam o' the settin sun, a dim object like a ghost, stannin alane by its single solitary sel—aiblins an auld tower, aiblins a rock, aiblins a tree stump, aiblins a clud, aiblins a vapour, a dream, a naething.

North. Yes, he worships nature, and does not paint with the fear of the public before his eyes. It is a miserable mistake to paint purposely for an Exhibition. He and his friend Hugh Williams[1] are the glory of the Scottish landscape school.

Shepherd. It's impossible to excel Williams—in his ain style—but he should leave the iles and keep to water-colours. In his water-colours, so saft and hazy—sae like the aerial scenery that shifts afore the half-closed een when a midsummer dream has thrown its glamour ower a body sinkin down to slumber in noonday, within a fairy-ring on the hillside—no a man in Britain will get the heels o' Hugh Williams ; and as for the man himsel, I like to look on him, for he's gotten a gran' bald phrenological head, the face o' him's at ance good-natured and intelligent; and o' a' the painters I ken, his mainners seems to me to be the maist the mainners o' a gentleman and a man o' the world—if he wad but gie up

[1] Hugh Williams was celebrated for his water-coloured landscapes generally, and for his *Views in Greece* in particular. He published *Travels in Italy, Greece, and the Ionian Islands, with Engravings from original Drawings.* 2 vols. 1820.

makin auld puns, and be rather less o' the Whig and a wee mair o' the Tory. But here's his health——

North. With perfect satisfaction. "Hugh Williams"—Not Greek Williams—not Grecian Williams—for I suppose he was somewhere about fifty years of age before he ever saw Greece;—but Welsh Williams—Scotch Williams—for in Wales was he born, and in Scotland was he bred, and neither country need be ashamed of him.

Shepherd. As weel ca' me Greek Hogg—or Grecian Hogg, because I write, as ye tell me, in the Doric dialect. But forgettin sic folly, what think you o' the Death o' the Buck, by that Southron, Edwin Landseer? Never saw I bloodthirsty fierceness better depicted than in the muzzles o' thae ferocious Jowlers. Lord preserve us, was that the way, think ye, that the Spanish bloodhounds used to rug doun the Maroons in the West Indies?

North. There is a leetle, and but a leetle something, resembling affectation, in the manner of the Huntsmen.

Shepherd. Come, sir, nane o' your captious criticism. That black dog, wi' the red legs, and chafts and eebrees, is equal to onything that ever was painted in this world; and that white deevil—a bick,[1] I'se warrant, for bicks are aye the fleetest and the fiercest, hinging to the Buck's lug, with teeth inextricable as arsenic to the coat of the stomach, is a canine leech, that if no chocked aff frae the bite, would soon let out the animal's life, and stretch him with his spreading antlers on the heather.

North. Heather, James—there is no heather in the picture. The scene is not peculiarly Highland—and therefore I do not feel the bonnet and tartan of the Hunter.

Shepherd. I saw naething to fin' fault wi'—you see it's no a red deer—but a fallow deer—frae the spots;—and the Park, as they ca't it, 'll be somewhere perhaps on the borders o' the mountainous pairts o' Perthshire or Argyllshire;—or wha kens that the scene's no English—and that the painter has gien the hunter something o' the dress o' a Highlander, frae an imaginative feeling but half-understood by his ain mind, as maist imaginative feelings are, but nane the waur on that account either for paintin or poetry.—But what say ye to the statutes, sir?

[1] *Bick*—bitch.

North. Macdonald[1] from Rome is a statuary, James, not only of promise, but of performance. Edinburgh is a considerable village now, and there is room in it for both him and Joseph. He is sure to succeed.

Shepherd. A mair innocent, mair kinder and bonnier lassie than her wi' the burdie in the tae haun, and the cup o' water —is't?—in the tither, wanting the cretur to tak a drink—I never saw; and the ither taller figur o' the virgin sendin aff the carrier pigeon wi' a love-letter to him ayont the hills, in answer to the ane she has hidden in her bosom, is a delicate conception, whether new or auld I neither ken nor care, and as far as I'm a judge o' sculpture and statutes, executed wi' a smoothness, and I had maist said warmth,—but then marble's a cauld thing in itself to the touch,—that exactly hits the right point o' loveableness in the figure and posture o' a virgin about to be married in a year or twa—but haply no to him she has sent the letter to, for hoo seldom is the soul's first celestial imagination o' rapture realised—hoo seldom in the auld warld, as in the new, did Hymen ever light his torch to consecrate the ecstasies of virgin bosoms meeting in the life-deep passion of a first love!

North. Mary Morison!

Shepherd. Christopher, I never see marble but I think o' moonlicht—Hoo's that?

North. Some one of those fine, old, solemn associations, of which the poet's soul is full. In his thoughts and feelings all external things lie linked together in amities and sympathies, of which the worldling has no notion. Music, Marble, Melancholy, Moonlight, all begin with an M—but so do Macedon and Monmouth—the Four are a Four by fine affinities.

Shepherd. There you're going ayont my deepth—and you'll sune be oot o' your ain too—if ye plump into the pool o' metaphysics, and try "to pluck up drowned meaning by the locks" —but hae ye been at the Opposition Exhibition—they tell me it's capital—Can that be true? and what for did the painters cast out among themselves, and whence a' this cabawl?

North. It's a long story that, James, and might be tedious; nor is it an affair, I confess, in which I can take much interest; but the artists who were dissatisfied with the Directors of the Institution, if so it were that they were dissatisfied, did right

[1] Lawrence Macdonald still resides in Rome.

to secede, and open an Opposition Exhibition. This is a free country, James; Tories like you and I love liberty, and we grant to others the same rights and privileges which we ourselves at all times exert and enjoy!

Shepherd. I clap my hauns to hear sic sentiments frae your mouth, for I heard some of your freens rinnin doun Nicholson, and Syme, and Joseph, and Hamilton, and the lave.

North. Very right, my dear James, very right in any of my friends to run down anybody they choose, at any time or place, and for any reason; but I, as you know, run people up, and run people down, of my own free will and pleasure, and never allow my friends—deservedly dear to me as many dozens of them are, of both sexes—to influence my opinion in the slightest degree, on any one single thing in this world, living or dead, rational or irrational, monoped, biped, or quadruped. The Opposition Exhibition, as you call it, James, is excellent; and a true lover of the arts will go from one to the other with pleasure, nor will his comparisons be odious.

Shepherd. Naebody ever did a better picture o' me than Nicholson, in my plaid, you ken, and wi' my celebrated dog, Hector, sittin sae wiselike by my side, "in a cleugh aneath a cliff,"—strong likenesses o' us baith, yet nane o' us ower sair flattered.[1]

North. Mr Nicholson is rather uncertain—no uncommon thing with artists of original minds; but some of his happiest performances are very happy. He has a picture of a Lady and Child in this Exhibition—that might be seen to advantage in any Exhibition in the island. In the dress of the mother—her arm and shoulder especially—there is something rather stiffish; but the child is nature itself—the colouring something in the style of the old masters.

Shepherd. I like that—especially in the heads o' bairns, and their shouthers.

North. Nicholson paints children better than he used to do, now that he's a married man.

Shepherd. A' painters should marry—it humaneezes their imaginations, and gies a tenderness to the ideal creations o' their genius that nae bachelor can ever infuse into his canvass.

[1] This picture is now in the possession of Mr John Wilson, Professor Wilson's eldest son.

North. Hamilton's architectural drawings are admirable specimens of wonder-working art. If you wish, James, to have a perfect knowledge of all the intended new Improvements, South and West Approach, &c., and indeed a bird's-eye view of all Edinburgh, go and take it at the Exhibition. I always knew Hamilton to be an architect of first-rate genius and skill, quite equal to Playfair and Burn, but I had no notion that he was such an artist.

Shepherd. Ony gude landscapes?

North. Not a few. Young Kidd, a pupil of Mr Thomson's I believe, possesses much of the taste, feeling, and genius of his great master; and D. Mackenzie, also quite a youth, if he will take my advice and give up his blue imitations, will ere long be an excellent artist. Two or three of his landscapes, even now (of the colour of this earth), are very beautiful.

Shepherd. In short, you think the Exhibition a gude ane—so nae mair about pictures for ae nicht, if you please, sir.

North. Unless I am much mistaken indeed, James, you introduced the subject yourself.

Shepherd. I'll bet you anither jug I did nae sic thing.

North. Done.

Shepherd. But wha'll decide? Let's drink the jug, though, in the first place. It's quite a nicht this for whusky toddy. Dinna you observe that a strong frost brings out the flavour o' the speerit in a maist surprising manner, and gies't a mair precious smell o'er the haill room? It's the chemical action, you understaun, o' the cauld and heat, the frost and fire, working on a' the materials o' the jug, and the verra jug itsel, frae nose to doup, sae that sma'-still becomes perfect nectar, on which Jupiter, or Juno either, micht hae got drunk, and Apollo, after a haill nicht's screed, risen up in the morning wi' his gowden hair, and not the least o' a headache, nor crap-sick as he druve his chariot along the Great Turnpike Road o' Heaven.

North. Have you been to see the Wild Beasts, James?

Shepherd. I took a day o' the Mound last week, sir.

North. A day o' the Mound!

Shepherd. Ay, a day o' the Mound. I took the haill o' the Shows,[1] ane after the ither, beginning wi' the Wild Beasts,

[1] In those days the caravans of itinerant showmen used to congregate on "the Mound," an unreclaimed region now gorgeous with Athenian temples and clothed with glittering evergreens.

and ending with the Caravan containing the Fat Boy, and the Dwarfie Woman and her tall husband, and the Malacca man, the White-headed Girl—and——

North. And what else?

Shepherd. Wull ye no let a body speak? What else?, a bairn that never was born, in a bottle alang wi' twa creturs like lizzards—a stuffed serpent wi' a gapin mouth o' red worsted, to mak it look bluidy-like after devouring its prey—forbye the body o' the shaven bear that was passed aff some seasons since for a dog-headed Indian frae America.

North. An interesting collection indeed, James.

Shepherd. Besides them, the man that aught the caravan, his wife and six children, sleept in't—he telt me sae himsel—a' nicht; and yet, I'm sure, I'm within boun's when I aver that the caravan was nae bigger in the inside than about twice or three times the inside o' ane o' the coaches that rins atween Embro' and Glasgow.

North. What did you admire most of the number?

Shepherd. The wee dwarfie woman, no three feet high, wi' a husband sax feet four: I never saw a happier couple. She loupt intil the pouch o' his shooting-jacket, and keekit[1] out like a maukin.[2] But oh! she had a great ugly wide mouth, and her teeth were as sharp and yellow as prins. I wadna hae sleepit in the same bed wi' sic a vermin for the mines o' Peru, for gin she had fa'n upon a body in the middle o' the nicht, and fastened on their throat like a rotten,[3] there wad hae been nae shakin her aff—the vampire. She was in the family way, sir.

North. The caravan?

Shepherd. I'm thinkin, Mr North, that ye dinna gang to the kirk so regular as you micht do, for I never hear you talkin about ministers. Wha do ye sit under?

North. My pew is too near the stove, James — But would you wish my talk to be of ministers? I have no objections to talk about the Theatre; but really, James, you must excuse me should I sport mum on church-going,—but, notwithstanding my aversion to all public appearance, I hobbled out and in to hear the Missionary Wolff.[4]

[1] *Keekit*—peeped. [2] *Maukin*—hare. [3] *Rotten*—rat.

[4] This celebrated traveller and indefatigable philanthropist is now (1855) the Rector of Isle Brewers, Somersetshire.

Shepherd. Ance a Jew, always a Jew, sir. But I wunner hoo the holy aye contrive to get married sae fast—it seems odd that the spiritual-minded should be sae fond o' the flesh. Catch ony o' them marrying an auld woman for the Christian graces o' her character; except, indeed, it be for the widow's mite—they generally prefer a sonsy lass, wi' a tocher o' her ain, and if, wi' a sickly only brither, far gane in a consumption, and wi' twa thousan' a-year, sae muckle the better,—for wi' sic a soum they may Christianise the heathen, and provide for a' the bairns besides;—and bairns they are sure to hae, aiblins twins — the first never a week beyond the nine months——

North. Beyond, James!

Shepherd. In or ower, sir.

North. Better marry than burn, Shepherd.

Shepherd. But there's nae occasion for burnin. There's him they ca'd the Sultan Katty Gheray,[1] wha carried aff a Scotch wife to Mount Caucasus—You'll no tell me that the Sultan was likely to be burned on the frosty Caucasus. He micht hae wrapt himsel in a pair o' ice sheets and snaw blankets, and a sleet coverlid—and the deevil burn him if he wad hae taen fire and thawed the bed-claes.

North. James, you're libellous.

Shepherd. I'm nae mair libellous nor ither folk. But just answer me this. Didna the Missionary Wolff seem to be devoted soul and body to the conversion o' the Jews, and naething else in this wicked warld?

North. Don't bother me any more, James, with "Le Loup et l'Agneau." I'm sick of the whole gang.

Shepherd. Gang ye never to the Theatre?

North. Occasionally behind the scenes.

Shepherd. Oh, sirs—oh, sirs! Hae ye come to that?—and can ye thole to see the pent on the faces o' them, the red on their cheeks, and the white on their chins, and the fause curls, and fauser eebrows—nae mair, they tell me, than a streak o' burned cork or coom—and the paste pearls on their gowns, and a' the rest o' the mak-believe frae tap to tae, where there's naething but delusion a'thegither; and the playactress that appears to the people in the pit a' fidgin fain to see her sparkling in spangles afore the lamps, gin she were taen and stripped

[1] The Sultan Katty Gheray married a Scotch lady of the name of Nielson.

naked on the spat, wad be naething but a lang rickle o' banes, and aneuch to mak a man——

North. James, a man at my time of life likes to be behind the scenes in any acted drama. You are mistaken in supposing that there is anything at all disgusting in a nearer approach to the divinities of the stage. They are not a whit more made up than the generality of young ladies in private parties—and then, in their case, there is no deception.

Shepherd. Nae deception, say ye?

North. None whatever! Strip a fashionably-dressed young lady who is swimming through a rout, of all the cork that keeps her buoyant, and you would be surprised, James, to behold the goddess of your idolatry.

Shepherd. They're geyan sair made up, I fear, sir?

North. You have seen, I dare say, a wooden young lady, a doll, James, after she has undergone denuding, her legs so stiff from shin to knee-pan, her most unsatisfactory waist, and back as flat as a "hone" for sharpening razors——

Shepherd. I'll no sit here anither minute and hear sic language—no even frae you, Mr North. Ye tauk o' coorseness——

North. Few provincial theatres are equal to that of Edinburgh. Murray is one of the best managers and best comic actors in Britain.[1]

Shepherd. But oh! man, what for do ye gang behind the scenes? It had nearly broke my heart whan I first fand out that Punch and his wife warna alive—and that it was only the mock deevil that carried a mock Punch awa to a mock hell——

North. Whisht—whisht.

Shepherd. Would there was nae real ane, Mr North!

North. Eh?

Shepherd. Pardon me, sir, but there's nae need pretending no to understaun' me—for you're as muckle interested in the wush as I can possibly be—aiblins mair—as you're a hantle aulder, and in your younger days——

North. Don't rip up old sores, my dear Shepherd——

Shepherd. Nae offence—nae offence, sir—but what for be ganging ahint the scenes?

[1] Mr Murray, who managed the Edinburgh theatre for about forty years to the entire satisfaction of the public, died at St Andrews in 1853.

North. James, a man at my time of life, who has seen as much of the world as I have done, sees everything in its real hue and form, nor depends on illusory imagination. "The world is a stage, and all the men and women merely players." I see that—I know it—yet still I take my station behind the scenes and look on, not without interest, James, at the passions, real or mimic, of the patients or the puppets, James—for I too play my part (alas! with some difficulty now, but for the prompter), and how soon, James, may the curtain fall on my last appearance on an earthly stage!

Shepherd. I sometimes wunner how the warld will gang on when I'm dead. It's no vanity, or ony notion that I gar the wheels o' the world work, that makes me think sae, but just an incapacity to separate my life frae the rest o' creation. Suns settin and risin, and me no there to glower! Birds singin, the mavis in the wood, and the laverock in the lift, and me no there to list—list—listen! Bonny lasses tripping through the dew-flaughts, and nae kiss o' mine to bring the blush-roses on their lilied bosoms! Some ane, lovelier than the lave, singin ane o' my ain sangs, and me in the unhearin grave! Thochts like these will come fleein into my spirit during the night-watches, but they can find no resting-place for the soles of their feet, ony mair than the bits o' wearied sea-birds that will try to sit down on the riggin o' a ship at sea!

North. Shepherd, you should have been a sailor.

Shepherd. But the ship, you see, although a' by hersel on the great wide deep, is sailing prosperously afore the Monsoon, and her crew wunna alloo the winged creturs to settle among the cordage, sae daft wi' joy are they a' on their hameward-bound voyage, while aiblins the thousan' spires o' a coral-reef are right in the track o' her roaring prow, and in another hour she will disappear like a foam-bell frae the sea.

North. How the Cockneys prate about Shakespeare, James! and abuse the public for not encouraging his Dramas on the stage!

Shepherd. Poor deevils! They had better haud their tongues about Cordelia, and Juliet, and Cleopatra, and Imogen, or I'll fasten my crook intil the nape o' their necks, and harl them out to dereesion. Whare's the playactors and playactresses that can act Shakespeare's characters, noo that

John Kammel and Mrs Siddons is baith dead? Besides, gin they were leevin, wha but a Cockney wad wush to see oftener than ance or twice a-year tragedies that cause a soul-quake? The creturs in their hearts wad far rather see Mother Guse.

North. I wish, James, you would write a Tragedy.

Shepherd. I hae ane in my pouch, man—"Mirk Monday."[1]

North. No Poet of this age has shown sufficient concentration of thought and style for tragedy. All the living poets are loose and lumbering writers—and I will engage to point out half-a-dozen feeblenesses or faults of one kind or another in any passage of six lines that you, James, will recite from the best of them.

Shepherd. He's gettin fuddled noo I see,—or he wadna be haverin about poetry.—Mr North, you're as sober as when we begood to the saxth jug afore the ane that was the immediate predecessor o' this jug's great-grandfather—but as for me, I'm blin' fou, and rather gizzy. I canna comprehend hoo we got into this room, and still less hoo we're to get out again —for I'll stake my character that there's no ae single door in a' the four wa's. I shouldna care gin there was a shake-down or a suttee; but I never could sleep wi' a straught back. Mercy on us! the haill side o' the house is fa'en doon, as in the great earthquake at Lisbon. Steady—sir—steady—that's Mr Awmrose—you ken Mr Awmrose. (Awmrose, he's far gane the nicht, and I'm feared the fresh air 'll coup and capsize him a'thegither.)

North. Mr Ambrose, don't mind me—give Mr Hogg your arm. James, remember there are a couple of steps. There now—I thought Pride would have a Fall at last, James! Now coachy!! drive to the devil.

[*Exeunt.*

[1] The sun was totally eclipsed on Monday the 24th March 1652: hence the expression *Mirk Monday.*

XIII.

(APRIL 1827.)

Scene,—Ambrose's Hotel, Picardy Place—Paper Parlour.

North, Tickler, Shepherd.

North. "Gold-headed Cane,"[1] indeed! Could I think, Tickler, that this crutch of mine would have nothing better to say for itself and its old master, when the world desires it to be inditing about Christopher, I would break it across my knee, into pieces, six inches long, thus—and send it to the nearest old beggar-woman to boil her kettle with, for a dish of weak tea and superannuated scandal.

Tickler. The writer had hold of some good subjects; but he is dull, heavy, pedantic, prosaic, pompous, and inane, beyond the proper pitch for sleep. Not one single anecdote, incident, remark, image, sentiment, or feeling, does the Stick utter; and yet he pretends to have been hand and glove with Ratcliffe, Mead, Askew, Pitcairn, and Baillie!

North. What, Tickler, if one and all of the Five were but very ordinary persons? Doctors are generally dull dogs; and nobody in tolerable health and spirits wishes to hear anything about them and their quackeries.

Tickler. Their faces are indeed at all times most absurd; but more especially so when they are listening to your account of yourself, and preparing to prescribe for your inside, of which the chance is that they know no more than of the interior of Africa.

[1] *The Gold-headed Cane*, 1827, said to have been written by Dr Paris, is a repertory of gossip about medical matters.

North. And yet, and yet, my dear Tickler, when old bucks like us are out of sorts, then, like sinners with saints, we trust to the sovereign efficacy of their aid, and feel as if they stood between us and death. There's our beloved Shepherd, whose wrist beats with a yet unfelt pulse,——

Shepherd. I dinna despise the doctors. In ordinary complaints I help mysel out o' the box o' drogs; and I'm never mair nor three days in gettin richt again;—the first day, for the beginning o' the complaint—dull and dowie, sair gien to gauntin, and the streekin out o' ane's airms, rather touchy in the temper, and no easily satisfied wi' onything ane can get to eat;—the second day, in bed wi' a nicht-cap on, or a worsted stockin about the chafts, shiverin ilka half-hour aneath the blankets, as if cauld water were pourin doun your back; a stamach that scunners at the very thocht o' fude, and a sair sair head, amaist as if a wee deevil were sittin in't knappin stanes wi' an airn hammer;—the third day about denner-time hungrier than a pack o' hounds, yokin to the haggis afore the grace, and in imagination mair than able to devour the haill jiget, as weel's the giblet-pie and the pancakes.

North. And the fourth day, James?

Shepherd. Out wi' the grews gin it be afore the month o' March, as souple and thin in the flanks as themsels—wi' as gleg an ee—and lugs pricked up ready for the start o' pussie frae amang the windle-straes.—Halloo—halloo—halloo!—Oh man, arena ye fond o' coorsin?

Tickler. Of hare-soup I am—or even roasted hare—but——

Shepherd. There are some things that a man never gets accustomed to, and the startin o' a hare's ane o' them;—so is the whurr o' a covey o' paitricks—and aiblins so is the meetin o' a bonny lassie a' by hersel amang the bloomin heather, when she seems to rise up frae the earth, or to hae drapped doun frae heaven.—Were I to leeve ten thousan' years, and gang out wi' the grews or pointers every ither day, I sud never get the better o' the dear delightfu' dirl o' a fricht, when pussie starts wi' her lang horns.

North. Or the covey whirrs——

Tickler. Or the bonny lassie——

Shepherd. Oh man, Tickler, but your face the noo is just like the face o' a satyr in a pictur-byuck, or that o' an auld

stane-monk keekin frae a niche in the corner o' an abbey-wa' —the leer o' the holy and weel-fed scoonrel's een seemin mair intense on the Sabbath, when the kirkyard is fu' o' innocent young maidens, trippin ower the tombs to the House o' Prayer! Mr North, sir, only look at the face o' him!

North. Tickler, Tickler, give over that face—it is absolutely getting like Hazlitt's.

Shepherd. What's that chiel doin noo, think ye, sir?

North. Sunk into utter annihilation.

Shepherd. He had a curious power that Hazlitt, as he was ca'd, o' simulatin sowl. You could hae taen your Bible oath sometimes, when you were readin him, that he had a sowl—a human sowl—a sowl to be saved—but then, heaven preserve us! in the verra middle aiblins o' a paragraph, he grew transformed afore your verra face into something bestial,—you heard a grunt that made ye grue, and there was an ill smell in the room, as frae a pluff o' sulphur.—And Hazlitt's dead?[1]

North. Yes, James, perfectly.

Shepherd. I wunner what the copyright o' the *Modern Pygmalion* would sell for, noo that Hazlitt's a posthumous author?

Tickler. Who the devil introduced this loathsome subject?

Shepherd. Your ain face, sir, when I was speakin aboot the bonny lasses.—You've just your ain face to blame for't, sir.—Fine him in a bumper, Mr North, for suggestin sic a sooterkin.[2]

North. We will, if you please, James, take each a glass—all round—of Glenlivet—to prevent infection.

Shepherd. Wi' a' my heart.—Sic a change in the expression o' your twa faces, sirs! Mr North, you look like a man that has just received a vote o' thanks for ha'in been the instrument o' some great national deliverance. Isna that wunnerfu' whisky? As for you, Mr Tickler,—your een's just like twa jaspers—pree'd ye ever the like o't?

North. Never, so help me Heaven!—never, since I was born!

Shepherd. Wordsworth tells the world, in ane of his prefaces, that he is a water-drinker—and it's weel seen on him.—There was a sair want of speerit through the haill o' yon lang "Excursion." If he had just made the paragraphs about ae half shorter, and at the end of every ane taen a caulker, like

[1] Hazlitt died in 1830.

[2] *Sooterkin*—abortion.

ony ither man engaged in geyan sair and heavy wark, think na ye that his "Excursion" would hae been far less fatiguesome?

Tickler. It could not at least well have been more so, James,—and I devoutly hope that that cursed old Pedlar is defunct. Indeed, such a trio as the poet himself, the packman, and the half-witted annuitant——

North. My friend Wordsworth has genius, but he has no invention of character—no *constructiveness*, as we phrenologists say.

Shepherd. He, and ither folk like him, wi gude posts and pensions, may talk o' drinkin water as muckle's they choose—and may abuse me and the like o' me for preferrin speerits—but——

North. Nobody is abusing you, my dear Shepherd——

Shepherd. Haud your tongue, Mr North—for I'm geyan angry the noo—and I canna thole being interrupted when I'm angry,—sae haud your tongue, and hear me speak,—and faith, gin some folk were here, they should be made to hear on the deafest side o' their heads.

North. Oyez! Oyez! Oyez!

Shepherd. Well then, gentlemen, it cannot be unknown to you that the water-drinking part of the community have not scrupled to bestow on our meetings here, on the Noctes Ambrosianæ, the scurrilous epithet of Orgies; and that I, the Shepherd, have come in for the chief part of the abuse. I therefore call on you, Mr North, to vindicate my character to the public, to speak truth and shame the devil—and to declare in Maga, whether or not you ever saw me once the worse of liquor during the course of your career?

North. Is it possible, my dearest friend, that you can trouble your head one moment about so pitiful a crew? That jug, James, with its nose fixed upon yours, is expressing its surprise that——

Tickler. Hogg, Hogg, this is a weakness which I could not have expected from you—Have you forgotten how the Spectator, and Sir Roger de Coverley, and others, were accused of wine-bibbing, and other enormities, by the dunces of those days?

Shepherd. Confound their back-biting malignity! Is there a steadier hand than that in a' Scotland?—see how the liquid

quivers to the brim, and not a drop overflowing—Is my nose red? my broo blotched? my een red and rheumy? my shanks shrunk? my knees, do they totter? or does my voice come from my heart in a crinkly cough, as if the lungs were rotten? Bring ony ane o' the base water-drinkers here, and set him doun afore me, and let us discuss ony subject he likes, and see whase head's the clearest, and whase tongue wags wi' maist unfalterin freedom!

North. The first thing, James, the water-drinker would do, would be to get drunk, and make a beast of himself.

Shepherd. My life, Mr North, as you ken, has been ane of some vicissitudes, and even now I do not eat the bread of idleness. For ae third o' the twenty-four hours, tak ae day wi' anither throughout the year, I'm i' the open air, wi' heaven's wind and rain perhaps, or its hail and sleet, and they are blessed by the hand that sends them, blashing against me on the hill:—For anither third, I am at my byucks—no mony o' them to be sure in the house—but the few that are no the wark o' dunces, ye may believe that; or aiblins doin my best to write a byuck o' my ain, or if no a byuck, siccan a harmless composition as ane o' my bits o' "Shepherd's Calendars," or the like;—or, if study hae nae charms, playin wi the bairns, or hearin them their lessons, or crackin wi' a neighbour, or sittin happy wi' the mistress by our ain twa sels, sayin little, but thinkin a hantle, and feelin mair. For the remaining third, frae ten at nicht to sax in the morning, enjoyin that sweet sound sleep that is the lot o' a gude conscience, and out o' which I come as regular at the verra same minute as if an angel gently lifted my head frae the pillow, and touched my eyelids with awakening licht,—no forgettin, as yoursel kens, Mr North, either evening or morning prayers, no verra lang anes to be sure, except on the Sabbath; but as I hope for mercy, humble and sincere, as the prayers o' us sinfu' beings should ever be—sinfu', and at a' times, sleepin or waukin, aye on the brink o' death! Can there be ony great harm, Mr North, in a life that—saving and excepting always the corrupt thochts o' a man's ain heart, which has been wisely said to be desperately wicked—even when it micht think itsel, in its pride, the verra perfection o' virtue——

North. I never left Altrive or Mount Benger, James, without feeling myself a better and a wiser man.

Shepherd. Nae man shall ever stop a nicht in my house, without partakin o' the best that's in't, be't meat or drink; and if the coof[1] canna drink three or four tummlers or jugs o' toddy, he has nae business in the Forest. But if he do nae mair than follow the example I'se set him, he'll rise in the morning without a headache, and fa' to breakfast, no wi' that fause appeteet that your drunkards yoke on to the butter and bread wi', and the eggs, and the ham and haddies, as if they had been shipwrecked in their sleep, and scoured wi' the salt-water, —but wi' that calm, sane, and steady appeteet, that speaks an inside sound in a' its operations as clockwork, and gives assurance o' a lang and usefu' life, and a large family o' children.

North. Replenish the dolphin, James.

Shepherd. She's no toom,[2] yet.—Now, sir, I ca' that no an abstemious life—for why should ony man be abstemious?—but I ca't a temperate life, and o' a' the virtues, there's nane mair friendly to man than Temperance.

Tickler. That is an admirable distinction, James.

Shepherd. I've seen you forget it sir, howsomever, in practice—especially in eatin. Oh, but you're far frae a temperate eater, Mr Tickler. You're ower fond o' a great heap o' different dishes at denner. I'm within boun's when I say I hae seen you devour a dizzen. For me, sufficient is the Rule of Three. I care little for soop—unless kail, or cocky-leeky, or hare-soop, or mock-turtle, which is really, considerin it's only mock, a pleasant platefu'; or hodge-podge, or potawto-broth, wi' plenty o' mutton-banes, and weel peppered; but your white soops, and your broon soops, and your vermisilly, I think naething o', and they only serve to spoil, without satisfyin a gude appeteet, of which nae man o' sense will ever tak aff the edge afore he attacks a dish that is in itself a denner. I like to bring the haill power o' my stamach to bear on vittles that's worthy o't, and no to fritter't awa on side dishes, sic as pâtes, and trash o' that sort, only fit for boardin-school misses, wi' wee shrimpit mouths, no able to eat muckle, and ashamed to eat even that: a' covered wi' blushes, puir things, if ye but offer to help onything ontil their plates, or to tell them no to mind folk starin, but to mak a gude denner, for that it will do them nae harm, but, on the contrary, mingle roses with the lilies of their delicate beauty.

[1] *Coof*—ninny. [2] *Toom*—empty.

Tickler. Every man, James, is the best judge of what he ought to eat, nor is one man entitled to interfere——

Shepherd. Between another man and his own stomach!—Do you mean to say that? Why, sir, that is even more absurd than to say that no man has a right to interfere between another and his own conscience, or his——

Tickler, And is that absurd?

Shepherd. Yes, it is absurd—although it has, somehow or other, become an apothegm.—Is it not the duty of all men, to the best o' their abilities, to enlighten ane anither's understandings? And if I see my brethren o' mankind fa' into a' sorts o' sin and superstition, is't nae business o' mine, think ye, to endeavour to set them right, and enable them to act according to the dictates o' reason and nature?

Tickler. And what then, James?

Shepherd. Why, then, sir, it may be often our duty to interfere between a man and his conscience, when that conscience is weak, or dark, or perverted—between a man and his religion, when that religion is fu' o' falsehood and idolatry. The opposite doctrine that holds that every man's religion is a matter solely between his own soul and his Maker, is, in my belief, a pernicious doctrine, and one that countenances all enormities of faith. There is surely such a thing as Truth—and such a thing as Falsehood—and for my ain part, I shall never leave ony freen' o' mine in undisturbed enjoyment o' falsehood, even if that falsehood relate to his God.

North. We are getting on difficult, on dangerous ground, my dear Shepherd——

Shepherd. Yes; but we maun a' tread difficult and dangerous ground, Mr North, every day in our lives,—even the simplest and the maist sincere,—and we are a' o' us bound to contribute to ane anither's security, amang the pitfalls and quagmires o' life. I hae nae notion of that creed that tells me to leave a dour, doited devil to go daunderin on, wi' his een shut, his ain way to perditicn.

North. Would you, like Missionary Wolff, challenge the Pope to battle, and call his religion a lie?

Shepherd. No, sir,—I wad never sae far forget mysel as to cease being a gentleman,—for then, so far, I should cease being a Christian. But gin I thocht Papistry a fause thing, which I do, I wadna scruple to say sae, in sic terms as were consistent wi' gude manners, and wi' charity and humility of

heart,—and back my opinion wi' sic arguments as I had learned out of that book which the Pope, I fancy, wadna allow a poor lay-creature like me to read at nicht, afore gaun to-bed, and just after I had seen the bairns a' soun' asleep in theirs, wi' their quiet smiling faces hushed to peace, under the protecting love o' Him wha had wrapt the innocent things in the heaven o' happy dreams. Still, I wadna ca' the Pope a leear, like Mr Wolff; for nae man's a leear, unless he kens that he is ane; and his Holiness, for onything I ken to the contrar, may be, in his delusion, a lover of the Truth.

North. You would not, if in Parliament, James, vote for what is called Catholic Emancipation?

Shepherd. I scarcely think I would,—at least I would be what Mr Canning says he is not, a security grinder.

Tickler. And I, James.

North. And I, James.

Shepherd. And, thank heaven! the majority of the British Parliament, and three-fourths of the British people, Mr North.

North. Have you read Dr Phillpotts'[1] Letter, Tickler?

Tickler. I have, with delight. One of the ablest productions of modern days—bold, fearless, manly, gentlemanly, Protestant.

North. And yet the Whigs all call it personal—nay, libellous—although Dr Phillpotts expresses towards Mr Canning, to whom it is addressed, the greatest respect for his character, and the highest admiration of his talents. Not thus, Tickler, did they speak and write of that illustrious person a few short years ago.

Tickler. I have made out a paper on that point,—but it is too long, I fear, for the Magazine—it would occupy three sheets—of malignity, stupidity, and abuse incredible, but from the tongues and fingers of Whigs. Even now, they hate Mr Canning. We, on the contrary, always loved him—then as now—but——

Shepherd. What noise is that in that press? Is't a mooss getting its neck into a trap? Let's see—

[*Opens the press, and out steps a person, shabby genteel, in black or brownish apparel.*

[1] Afterwards the Bishop of Exeter. In the letter referred to, and in other publications, he argued against the Catholic Emancipation Act. But when that measure was brought before Parliament by the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel, he preserved an entire silence, which was generally construed as consent.

Wha are ye, my man, that's here hearkenin to a conversation that I'm thinking, fra the face o' you, you're no very able to understand the drift o'?—wha are ye, my man, wi' cheeks like potty, and tautied hair, and a coat sae desperate short in the sleeves? But dinna be sae feared, I'm no gaun to put ye to death, only what was ye chrissend? or are you a Pagan wi' some outlandish name, and a mother-tongue unintelligible in this quarter o' the habitable globe? I'll haud ye, sir, by the cuff o' the neck, till ye speak—Are ye dumb, sir?

North. James, James—my dear Shepherd, relax your hold, he is a short-hand writer.

Shepherd. A short-hand writer! a short-hand writer! and that's the way o't—that's the way o't—that the Noctes Ambrosianæ are gotten up for that Magazine o' yours, Mr North!!! How durst you, sir, sit in that press takin down my words? A pretty gentleman o' the press, indeed! Gude faith! a wee thing would mak me fling you out o' the window! There's anither shake for you, sir, to mak your blood circulate.

North. Mr Gurney, don't mind the Shepherd, it is his way. —James, James, he is not one of the enemy—and as worthy a fellow as lives: moderate your fury, James.

Shepherd. Now the cat's out o' the bag. Never could I comprehend how a haill night's conversation, on to the sma' hours, could get itsel a' prented word for word in the Magazine, doun to my verra spellin, afore—and there, for thae sax years past, hae ye been writin in the press, my man, takin doun the conversation in hieroglyphics, and at hame extendin your notes, as they ca't, ower your sooens[1] and sma' beer afore gaun to sleep on caff.[2]

Tickler. Come, James, you are getting personal and abusive. Mr Gurney is a most excellent fellow—a man of education, and a small private fortune of his own on the death of his grandmother.

North. Sit down, Mr Gurney, and take a glass of toddy.

Shepherd. What for will you no speak, sir? Open your mouth and speak.

North. Mr Gurney, James, is no speaker.

Shepherd. What, is he dumb?

North. Rather so, Shepherd. It would be a long story to tell you how he lost his tongue early in life in Persia.

[1] *Sooens*—a sort of flummery made of the dust of oatmeal. [2] *Caff*—chaff.

Shepherd. He's aff—he's aff—out at the door like a shot. He may be a short-haun writer, but he's a lang-legged ane. See, yonner he's jinkin round the corner o' Union Place already, never doutin that I'm at his tails! There's no anither gentleman o' the press, is there, in ahint that ither door, on the richt cheek o' the fire?

Tickler. Well, the world must just content itself without any record of this meeting. Nor does it much matter, for I have seen the Shepherd much brighter.

Shepherd. I hate to see ony man ower bricht, as it is ca'd, in company. Commend me to the man that's just like a star amang ither stars—only noos and thans a wee thocht brichter than the luminaries around him, as if something internal glanced out frae within his verra core, and after a few fitfu' flashes, let him relapse back again into his former sober radiance.

Tickler. A new image, James, or something like it—Go on—I'll follow thee.

Shepherd. Or haply, sir, not that he was ony brichter than afore—but that the rest had grown somewhat dimmer, or mair obscure, as a cloud, or the shadow o' a cloud, had tamed their lustre, and made some o' them indeed amaist disappear frae the heavens a'thegither!

North. O! better and better, James. You speak like an absolute Coleridge.

Shepherd. Or suppose we liken a man, that in company is just what he ought to be, to a good fire—made o' Scotch coals, wi' a sprinklin o' English—no bleezin as if soot had fa'en doun the chimley, and then flingin out reek amaist to chock you, and also to blear your een, at the same time makin the room so insufferably hot that water would pabble in a dish; but a calm, composed fire, bold as the sun, yet mild almost as the moon, shinin and warmin all it looks upon with a summery spirit, till all our feelings expand in the glow like flowers, and the circle o' humanity round it becomes, in the best sense o' the word, Christianised by the gracious light!

North. That man, Tickler, flings away as much poetry in the course of an afternoon's crack, as would serve the Pet Poet of a Cockney coterie all his lifetime.

Shepherd. What's that you were sayin, sir, to Mr Tickler? I'm rather deafish. It's maist a pity the short-haun writer

ran aff; but aiblins he's gotten intil the press again through a back-door;—and if sae, I shanna disturb him; for I carena, for my ain pairt, although every single syllable that ever was uttered by me within these four wa's was prented in capitals, and circulated to the remotest corners o' the Earth.

North. Did you go t'other day, James, to hear Mr Somerville of Currie's[1] sermon against cruelty to animals? I don't remember seeing your face in the throng. It was an elegant discourse.

Shepherd. I dinna doubt that, for he's a clever chiel—and as gude a man and as humane as ever used a double-barrelled gun.

Tickler. What! Is he a sportsman, and yet preaches about cruelty to animals?

North. Did not you know, Tickler, that Mr Somerville invented a gun-lock, for which he ought to have got a patent?

Tickler. In that case he ought just to have allowed a brother clergyman to preach the Gibsonian Sermon.—For although, for my own part, I see no cruelty in field-sports, no man in the pulpit can possibly defend them; and if he omits all mention of them, he leaves his argument incomplete—and when the preacher is a notorious good shot, slaughtering right and left, to a dead certainty, there is room for the scoffers to treat the entire sermon with derision.

Shepherd. I dinna see that ava. Real cruelty to animals canna be defined, but everybody kens what it is—for example, thumpin wi' a rung a puir auld, tremblin, staggerin, worn-out, starved horse, reesting at a steep pull in the trams aneath a ton o' coals, a' the time the carter swearing like Cloots—that's cruelty, and should be preached against, and also punished by Act o' Parliament.

Tickler. But there is no cruelty, you think, James, in the Rev. Mr Somerville shooting at a hare on her form, who carries off into the brake her poor wounded withers full of No. 34 or 35, and there continues dying by inches all through the week—expiring, perhaps, within the tinkle of the Sabbath bell of Currie kirk?

Shepherd. It's just a' a dounricht sophism, Mr Tickler, and you ken it is—but I hate a' argling and hargarbargling o' argument ower ane's toddy—or indeed onywhere else, except

[1] Currie is a village near Edinburgh.

at the Bar when Jeffrey or Cobrun's speaking — and there, to be sure, it's a treat to hear the tane threeping and the tither threeping, as if not only their verra lives depended on't, but the haill creation; whereas the dispute was only about some abstract consideration o' a point o' law in the way o' preliminary form anent the regulation o' the Court, kittle enough to be understood, nae doubt, sin' the introduction o' the new system; but as to the real intrinsic maitter o' equity and justice, nae mair than a preliminary that might hae been gien against either the ae party or the ither, without detriment to the patrimonial interests either o' the plaintiff or defendant, the respondent or appellant, in sic a cause no easy o' being discriminated by a hearer like me, no verra deeply versed in the laws.

North. An Annual Sermon against any one particular vice, —and none more odious than cruelty of disposition,—is a foolish Institution. Let people go regularly to church, and hear good sermons, of which there is no lack either in the city or the country,—and they will be merciful to their beasts, I hope, through the spirit of Christianity thus fanned and fostered in their hearts.

Shepherd. That is verra true.—Cruelty to animals is no a gude subject for a haill sermon,—and it's only clever men, like Chalmers and Somerville, that can prevent it from becoming even absurd in the pulpit, when formally treated of, and at great length—whereas——

North. Put these two little volumes, James, in your pocket, that you are ogling on the side-table.—*Sketches of Persia*,— a few pages of it is a cheering recreation for a leisure hour. Sir John[1] tells a story admirably, and is a man of keen and incessant observation. I had no idea he could have written anything so light and vivacious,—so elegant even, and so full of character. The volumes must be popular, and I hope he will give us more of them,—a couple more at the least. Murray has published nothing so good of the kind for years.

Shepherd. Hae ye read Boaden's *Life o' Siddons*, sir?

North. I have, James—and I respect Mr Boaden for his intelligent criticism. He is rather prosy occasionally—but why not? God knows, he cannot be more prosy than I am

[1] Sir John Malcolm, G.C.B., for some time envoy at the court of Persia, died in 1833.

now at this blessed moment—yet what good man, were he present now, would be severe upon old Christopher for havering away about this, that, or t'other thing, so long as there was heart in all he said, and nothing *contra bonos mores?* Sarah was a glorious creature. Methinks I see her now in the sleep-walking scene!

Shepherd. As Leddy Macbeth! Her gran' high straicht-nosed face, whiter than ashes! Fixed een, no like the een o' the dead, yet hardly mair like them o' the leevin; dim, and yet licht wi' an obscure lustre through which the tormented sowl looked in the chains o' sleep and dreams wi' a' the distraction o' remorse and despair,—and oh! sic an expanse o' forehead for a warld o' dreadfu' thochts, aneath the braided blackness o' her hair, that had nevertheless been put up wi' a steady and nae uncarefu' haun before the troubled Leddy had lain doun, for it behoved ane so high-born as she, in the middle o' her ruefu' trouble, no to neglect what she owed to her stately beauty, and to the head that lay on the couch of ane o' Scotland's Thanes—noo, likewise about to be, during the short space o' the passing o' a thunder-cloud, her bluidy and usurping King.

North. Whisht—Tickler—whisht—no coughing.

Shepherd. Onwards she used to come—no Sarah Siddons—but just Leddy Macbeth hersel—though through that melancholy masquerade o' passion, the spectator aye had a confused glimmerin apprehension o' the great actress—glidin wi' the ghostlike motion o' nicht-wanderin unrest, unconscious o' surroundin objects,—for oh! how could the glazed, yet gleamin een, see aught in this material world?—yet, by some mysterious power o' instinct, never touchin ane o' the impediments that the furniture o' the auld castle micht hae opposed to her haunted footsteps,—on she came, wring, wringin her hauns, as if washin them in the cleansin dews frae the blouts o' blood,—but wae's me for the murderess, out they wad no be, ony mair than the stains on the spat o' the floor where some midnicht-slain Christian has groaned out his soul aneath the dagger's stroke, when the sleepin hoose heard not the shriek o' departing life.

Tickler. North, look at James's face. Confound me, under the inspiration of the moment, if it is not like John Kemble's!

Shepherd. Whether a' this, sirs, was natural or not, ye see I

dinna ken, because I never beheld ony woman, either gentle or semple, walkin in her sleep after having committed murder. But, Lord safe us! that hollow, broken-hearted voice, "Out, damned spot," was o' itsel aneuch to tell to a' that heard it, that crimes done in the flesh during time will needs be punished in the spirit during eternity. It was a dreadfu' homily yon, sirs; and wha that saw't would ever ask whether tragedy or the stage was moral, purging the soul, as she did, wi' pity and wi' terror?

Tickler. Ha, ha, ha!—James, was you at the Theatrical Fund Dinner,[1] my boy? and what sort of an affair was it?

Shepherd. Ay, you may lauch; but you did sae merely to conceal your emotion; for I saw your lips quiver at my picture o' the Siddons, as James Ballantyne used to ca' her in the Journal. He's the best theatrical creetic in Embro' though, notwithstanding rather ower pompous a style o' panegyric. But that's the way o' a' your creetics—high and low—rich and poor—Grosvenor Square and Grub Street—Royal Circus and Lawnmarket—you're a' upon stilts, and wi' speakin-trumpets, and talk o' the stage as if playactors and playactresses were onything mair than puppets, and could hae ony serious or permanent influence on the affairs o' this world. Whew, whew!

North. Would you believe it, James, that many modern Athenians assisted at the dinner you speak of, and did not subscribe a farthing; some not more than a penny, wrapped up in a bit of brown paper, as if it had been the Holy Alliance of Sovereigns?

Tickler. I think little about that—but do you know, James, that there are absolutely gentlemen in Edinburgh that are opposing, and going to appeal to Parliament, against the new improvements of the City—the South and the West approaches, and all because they may be taxed some ten or twenty shillings a-year?

North. They use two arguments—first, that the South and West approaches are local, and therefore ought not to cost those people anything who live in another part of the town.

Shepherd. Haw, haw, haw! So there's nae sic thing as a

[1] At this dinner, which took place on the 23d of February 1827, Sir Walter Scott, who was chairman, avowed himself, for the first time, as the author of the Waverley Novels.

City! According to that rule, every bit dirty close maun tak care o' itsel, and there maun be nae general pervadin spirit, like the verra spirit o' life in modern Athens. What sumphs and meesers!

North. The second argument is, that every new improvement in one part of a city deteriorates property in some other part—and that if there be a fine couple of approaches to Edinburgh from the West and the South, the northern part of the New Town, especially the Royal Circus, will be ruined, and the houses sell for nothing.

Shepherd. Haw, haw, haw! Hip, hip, hip, hurraw! What sumphs!

Tickler. Then the Oppositionists have "opened at Budge's a subscription for receiving donations!"

Shepherd. That's desperate bad English surely—bit what for dinna ye publish the names o' the Opposition, sir?

North. Because I hate all personality, James, and besides, the names, with some two or three exceptions, are so obscure that nobody would believe them to be real names, such as Smith, Taylor, Thomson, &c. &c.

Shepherd. And anonymous names o' that sort—weel, weel. I see the creturs, in this ill-written manifesto o' theirs, sir, that you hae gien me to glance at, object to the improvements, because they're to cost some twa or three hundred thousan' pounds. That's the verra reason I wad agree to them—for it shows they're on a gran' and magnificent scale, and I like a' things that's gran' and magnificent. Then, isna Embro' said to be a City of Palaces?

North. James, you're very high on your chair to-night—you're surely sitting on something.

Shepherd. Ay—the last month's Magazines and Reviews. They're a' but indifferent numbers this last month—and your ain, sir, no muckle better than the lave—though it maintains a sort o' superiority.

North. I can *afford*, now and then, to be stupid. Wait till May-day, my dear Shepherd, and you shall see GLORIOUS TWINS.

Tickler. The *Monthly Review* is a creditable work; and you surprise me, North, by telling me that it does not sell. The articles are heavy indeed, and anything but brilliant; but there is a sort of sober, steady stupidity about many of them,

that I should have thought would have been popular among a certain set.

North. It sells pretty well—about six hundred I understand. That number will pay a few pounds, occasionally, to a crack contributor, and the common run of its writers are not persons who can expect to be paid any other remuneration than a tavern supper once a-quarter, which costs Mr Knight but little—and he is too generous a fellow, we all know, to care about such a trifle.

Shepherd. I canna thole't. The Editor, I fear, 's a guse—and he maun aye be kecklin himsel, after layin a big muckle clumsy egg amang the nettles, and then hissin at you, as if you were gaun to gie him a kick—haudin his doup up in the air in triumph, as if he were about to fire a royal salute. A guse is a lang-leeved bird, but that's only when he leads a quate life, in or about some auld ha' or castle, and has naething to disturb him—but a guse, though slow in understandin, is a bird o' quick feelings, and allow him to harass himsel wi' passengers and passers-by, and he will get lean in a twelvemonth, dwine away in perfect vexation, and waddling a' by himsel, like a rejected lover, into some obscure nook, expire the victim o' sensibility.

Tickler. North, do you know anything about this Journal of Foreign Literature about to be published in London?

North. Something. I have heard some great, and many respectable, names spoken of in connection with it, and if not started till the plan is matured, and regular contributors engaged, it will certainly succeed—otherwise, as certainly fail. It is, I hear, to be published by an eminent German house in London, and is intended to give the spirit of Continental literature and philosophy.

Tickler. A fine field undoubtedly—and I am happy to hear the plan is not to be confined to the literature and philosophy of Germany.

Shepherd. So am I—for the German authors are like pigs—great cry and little wool. I hae read about some thretty volumms o' translations frae the German this last year, chiefly tales, and deevil tak me if there be a first-rate tale in the haill lot.

North. A first-rate tale, James, is rather a rarity. I can't say that I ever read one. The *Crusaders* of Sir Walter Scott

comes pretty near my notion of one, but not quite up to it—there being somewhat too much changing of dresses, and too much legerdemain. *Redgauntlet*, by the same writer, is somewhere, I opine, about a tenth-rate tale—*Peveril of the Peak* a fourth-rate one—*Quentin Durward* a third-rate—*Waverley* a second—*The Pirate* a third—*Ivanhoe* and *Kenilworth*——

Shepherd. Let's see a tale o' your ain, sir, afore ye speak sae bauldly o' your betters.

North. Jeffrey and I never write anything original. It's porter's work.

Shepherd. Because ye canna. Ye're only creetics, and writin a review's ae thing, and writin a byuck's anither, let me tell you that, sir; and yet I dinna ken, Mr North, although I hae nae howps o' Mr Jaffray, oh! man, but I do think that you, that wrote the "Birds," and "Streams," and "Cottages," and "Hints for the Holidays," and "Selby's Ornithology," and other Leading Articles, last year, micht write a byuck to shame us a', gin ye wad only let yersel lowse on a subject, and pour yersel out wi' a' your birr ower four volumms, like a spate carrying everything afore you on to Finis, and drownin the catastrophe in a flood of tears.

North. James, I'll tell you a kind of composition that would tell.

Shepherd. What is't, man? Let's hear't.

North. Pastoral Dramatic Poetry, partly prose and partly verse—like the "Winter's Tale," or, "As You Like It," or "The Tempest," or "The Midsummer-Night's Dream."

Shepherd. You're just the man for that, Mr North, sir,—only you're rather auld.

North. I have four such dramas, James, in my escritoire.

Shepherd. Out wi' them, and let's see whether they'll be damned or no. Oh, sir, but you're hated by the Cockneys!

North. I—I—James—hated by the Cockneys? What harm did I ever to the nation?

Shepherd. Extirpated them—that's a'—dethroned their king, and drove him into exile,—reduced the Royal Family to beggars—taught the Nobility to spell themselves wi' the letter M,—and rendered Little Britain desolate.

Tickler. Dramas of which the scenes are laid in the country cannot be good, for the people have no character.

Shepherd. Nae character's better than a bad ane, Mr

Tickler;—but you see, sir, you're just perfectly ignorant o' what you're talkin about—for it's only kintra-folk that has ony character ava,—and town's-bodies seem to be a' in a slump. Hoo the street rins wi' leevin creatures, like a stream rinnin wi' foam-bells! What maitter if they a' break as they gang by? For anither shoal succeeds o' the same empty race!

North. The passions in the country, methinks, James, are stronger and bolder, and more distinguishable from each other, than in towns?

Shepherd. Deevil a passion's in the town, but envy, and back-biting, and conceitedness. As for friendship, or love, or hate, or revenge—ye never meet wi' them where men and women are a' jumbled throughither, in what is ca'd ceevileezed society. In solitary places, the sicht o' a human face aye brings wi't a corresponding feeling o' some kind or ither,—there can be nae sic thing as indifference in habitations stannin here and there, in woods and glens, and on hill-sides, and the shores o' lochs or the sea.

Tickler. Are no robberies, murders, and adulteries, perpetrated in towns, James?

Shepherd. Plenty—and because there are nae passions to guard frae guilt. What man wi' a sowl glowin wi' the free feelings o' nature, and made thereby happy and contented, wi' his plaid across his breast, would condescend to be a highway robber, or by habit and repute a thief? What man, whose heart loupt to his mouth whenever he forgathered wi' his ain lassie, and never preed her bonny mou' but wi' a whispered benediction in her ear, wad at ance damn and demean himsel by breakin the seventh commandment? As for committin murder, leave that to the like o' Thurtell and Probert,[1] and the like, wha seem to have had nae passions o' ony kind, but a passion for pork chops and porter, drivin in gigs, wearin rough big-coats wi' a dizzen necks, and cuffin ane anither's heads wi' boxin-gloves on their nieves,—but nae real South kintra shepherd ever was known to commit murder, for they're ower fond o' fechtin at fairs, and kirns, and the like, to tak the trouble o' puttin ye to death in cool blood——

Tickler. James, would you seriously have North to write dramas about the loves of the lower orders—men in corduroy breeches, and women in linsey-woollen petticoats——

[1] See *ante*, p. 81, note.

Shepherd. Wha are ye, sir, to speak o' the lower orders? Look up to the sky, sir, on a starry nicht, and puir, ignorant, thochtless, upsettin cretur you'll be, gin you dinna feel far within and deep doun your ain sowl, that you are, in good truth, ane o' the lower orders—no perhaps o' men, but o' intelligences! and that it requires some dreadfu' mystery far beyond your comprehension, to mak you worthy o' ever in after life becoming a dweller among those celestial mansions. Yet, think ye, sir, that thousan's and tens o' thousan's o' millions, since the time when first God's wrath smote the earth's soil with the curse o' barrenness, and human creatures had to earn their bread wi' sweat and dust, haena lived and toiled, and laughed and sighed, and groaned and grat, *o' the lower orders*, that are noo in eternal bliss, and shall sit above you and Mr North, and ithers o' the best o' the clan, in the realms o' heaven!

Tickler. 'Pon my soul, James, I said nothing to justify this tirade.

Shepherd. You did, though. Hearken till me, sir. If there be no agonies that wring the hearts of men and women lowly born, why should they ever read the Bible? If there be no heavy griefs makin aftentimes the burden o' life hard to bear, what means that sweet voice callin on them to "come unto me, for I will give them rest?" If love, strong as death, adhere not to yon auld widow's heart, while sairly bowed down, till her dim een canna see the lift, but only the grass aneath her feet, hoo else would she or could she totter every Sabbath to kirk, and wi' her broken, feeble, and quiverin voice, and withered hands clasped together on her breast, join, a happy and a hopefu' thing, in the holy Psalm? If——

Tickler. James, you affect me, but less by the pictures you draw, than by the suspicion—nay, more than the suspicion—you intimate that I am insensible to these things——

Shepherd. I refer to you, Mr North, if he didna mean, by what he said about corduroy breeks and linsey-woollen petticoats, to throw ridicule on all that wore them, and to assert that nae men o' genius, like you or me, ought to regard them as worthy o' being charactereezed in prose or rhyme?

North. My dear James, you have put the argument on an immovable basis. Poor, lonely, humble people, who live

in shielings, and huts, and cottages, and farmhouses, have souls worthy of being saved, and therefore not unworthy of being written about by such authors as have also souls to be saved; among whom you and I, and Tickler himself——

Shepherd. Yes, yes—Tickler himself, sure aneuch. Gie's your haun, Mr Tickler, gie's your haun—we're baith in the right; for I agree wi' you, that nae hero o' tragedy or a Yepic should be brought forrit ostentatiously in corduroy breeks, and that, I suppose, is a' you intended to say.

Tickler. It is indeed, James; I meant to say no more.

North. James, you would make a fine Bust.

Shepherd. I dinna like busts, except o' ideal characters, sic as water-nymphs, and dryads, and fawns, and Venuses, and Jupiters. A man o' real life, aiblins, Mr Tickler, wi' corduroy breeks, or at the best velveteens, has naething to do wi' a bust; and then you maun be represented without your neck-cloth, and your breast bare—and wi' only head and shouthers, perhaps—sittin a daft-like image on a pedestal. I dinna like busts.

Tickler. Byron's Bust, James?

Shepherd. Ay, I like it—for he had a beautiful face, like as o' Apollo,—high birth too,—a genius rare aneath the skies; and he died young, and far aff in a foreign land—the land, too, o' busts, and o' immortal song. I'se warrant that his een took a thousand expressions in the course o' ae single hour, but in those serene marble orbs there is but one—an expression o' uninterrupted and eternal peace. His lip, they said, was apt to curl into scorn—and nae wunner, for it was a tryin thing, wi' a' his fauts, to be used as he was used by those that micht hae forgien; but in the bust I saw, his mouth was mild as that o' a man in a dreamless sleep,—and yet something there was about it, too, that tauld the leevin lips it imaged must have been eloquent to express all the noblest, best emotions o' a great poet's soul! Byron was entitled to a breathin bust—a cold, still, marble image, peacefully divine; but I, sirs, am weel contented wi' my picture in body-colours by Nicholson, and so should you too, Mr Tickler—while as to Mr North, I hae some diffeeculty in determining—yet, on the whole, I'm disposed to think he should be sculptured by Chantrey——

Tickler. And placed on the Half-Moon Battery,[1] James, beside the statue of our most gracious King!

North. Cease your fooling, lads. James, I intend commencing a series of articles on the British Navy.

Shepherd. Oh! do, sir—do, sir—do, sir. It's a gran' topic, and you're just the man to do't, wi' your naval knowledge and national enthusiasm.

North. All the Fleet-fights, James, all the actions of single ships—all boat-affairs, such as cuttings-out, storming of batteries, &c. &c. &c.

Shepherd. The whole sailor's life at sea, my boys. If you'll promise, sir, aye to read my Shepherd's Calendar, I'll promise aye to read your Naval Chronicle.

North. A bargain, James. Pray, James, by the way, have you read Almack's?[2]

Shepherd. The author sent me a copy—for he's a chiel that I used to ken when he was a clerk in the coach-office o' the Star Inn, Princes Street, and he had aye a turn for what he ca'd high life. He used to get into that sort of society in Embro' by pretending to be a flunkey, and stannin ahint chairs at great parties—and he's naturally a genteel lad, and no that stupid—so that, noo that he fills a situation something similar, as I have heard, in London, he gets access to Lords and Leddies by flunkeyin't; which is, however, a species of forgin, and sometimes subjects a lad to being sair kickit—whilk has, mair than ance or twice either, happened until the author o' Almack's. But a clour on the head's waur than a kick on the bottom.

North. What's the fellow's name?

Shepherd. That's surprising! You've just driven his name out o' my head by askin for it. I canna remember't—but it's a very common name, and o' nae repute, except among the mechanical tredds.

Tickler. What is *Crockford-house*, Mr North?

North. A clever satire of Luttrel's, on one of the Devils of one of the London Hells. You know Luttrel,[3] I presume, sir?

Tickler. Know him — that I do — and one of the most accomplished men in all England—a wit and a scholar.

[1] Of Edinburgh Castle. [2] One of the trashy fashionable novels of the day.
[3] A London wit, a friend of Thomas Moore's, and author of a poem entitled *Advice to Julia.*

Shepherd. I think verra little in general o' your wits and your scholars, and your most accomplished men in all England. They may be very clever and agreeable chiels in company and conversation, but clap a pen into their hand, and bid them write something, and, oh! but their expressions are sairly deficient in point, their love-sangs cauld and clear as the drap at a man's nose on a frosty mornin;—as for their charauds, even after you've been tauld them, there's nae findin them out; and, hech, sirs! but their prologues and their epilogues are, twenty yawns to the line, soporifics that neither watchman nor sick-nurse could support.

Tickler. The Honourable William Spencer, although a wit and a scholar, is, like my friend Luttrel, an exception to your general rule, James.

Shepherd. Is that him that wrote "Bedgelert, or the Grave o' the Greyhound"? Faith, that chiel's a poet. Thae verses hae muckle o' the auld ballant pathos and simplicity;—and then he translated "Leonora," too, didna he? That's anither feather in his cap that Time's hand 'll no plook frae't.—What for did ye no send me out to Altrive Hood's "National Tales"? Yon "Whims and Oddities" o' his were maist ingenious and divertin. Are the "National Tales" gude?

North. Some of them are excellent, and few are without the impress of originality. I am glad to see that they are published by Mr Ainsworth,[1] to whom I wish all success in his new profession. He is himself a young gentleman of talents, and his "Sir John Chiverton" is a spirited and romantic performance.

Shepherd. Surely, Mr North, you'll no allow anither Spring to gang by without comin out to the fishing? I dinna understaun' your aye gaun up to the Cruick-Inn in Tweedsmuir. The Yarrow Trouts are far better eatin—and they mak far better sport too—loupin out the linns in somersets like tumblers frae a spring-brod, head-ower-heels,—and gin your pirn doesna rin free, snappin aff your tackle, and doun wi' a plunge four fathom deep i' the pool, or awa like the shadow o' a hawk's wing alang the shallows.

North. Would you believe it, my dear Shepherd, that my piscatory passions are almost dead within me; and I like now

[1] Mr W. H. Ainsworth has since contributed very largely to the popular literature of the day.

to saunter along the banks and braes, eyeing the younkers angling, or to lay me down on some sunny spot, and with my face up to heaven, watch the slow-changing clouds!

Shepherd. I'll no believe that, sir, till I see't,—and scarcely then,—for a bluidier-minded fisher nor Christopher North never threw a hackle. Your creel fu',—your shootin-bag fu',—your jacket-pouches fu',—the pouches o' your verra breeks fu',—half-a-dozen wee anes in your waistcoat, no to forget them in the croon o' your hat,—and, last o' a', when there's nae place to stow awa ony mair o' them, a willow-wand, drawn through the gills of some great big anes like them ither folk would grup wi' the worm or the mennon—but a' gruppit wi' the flee—Phin's[1] delight, as you ca't,—a killin inseck,—and on gut that's no easily broken,—witness yon four-pounder aneath Elibank wood, where your line, sir, got entangled wi' the auld oak-root, and yet at last ye landed him on the bank, wi' a' his crosses and his stars glitterin like gold and silver amang the gravel! I confess, sir, you're the king o' anglers. But dinna tell me that you have lost your passion for the art; for we never lose our passion for ony pastime at which we continue to excel.

Tickler. Now that you two have begun upon angling, I shall ring the bell for my nightcap.

Shepherd. What! do you sleep wi' a nichtcap?

Tickler. Yes, I do, James—and also with a nightshirt—extraordinary as such conduct may appear to some people. I am a singular character, James, and do many odd things, which, if known to the public, would make the old lady turn up the whites of her eyes in astonishment.

Shepherd. Howsomever that be, sir, dinna ring for a nichtcap, for we're no gaun to talk ony mair about angling! We baith hae our weakness, Mr North and me;—but there's Mr Awmrose—(*Enter Mr Ambrose*)—bring supper, Mr Awmrose—Verra weel, sir, I thank ye—hoo hae you been yoursel, and hoo's a' wi' the wife and weans?—Whenever you like, sir; the sooner the better. [*Exit Mr Ambrose.*

North. You knew Bishop Heber,[2] Mr Tickler, I think? He was a noble creature—

[1] Phin was an approved artificer of fishing-tackle. The shop still exists, and sustains its ancient reputation.

[2] Reginald Heber, Bishop of Calcutta, died in the East Indies in 1826.

Tickler. He was so. Why did not the writer of that most excellent article about him in the *Quarterly*, give us a quotation from Sir Charles Grey's[1] beautiful funeral oration over his illustrious friend?

North. That is a question I cannot answer; but such an omission was most unpardonable. Neither could it have been from ignorance—it must have been intentional.

Tickler. Perhaps he feared that Sir Charles Grey's pathetic oration would have made his own eulogy seem dull.

North. He need not have feared that—for they would have naturally set off each other—the reviewer, whoever he may be, being a man of fine talents, and a forcible writer.

Tickler. For all that, he may be capable of——

Shepherd. Mr Soothey's the author o' that article, in my opinion; and Mr Soothey's no capable o' onything that's no just perfectly richt. There's no a man leevin that I think mair o' than Mr Soothey—and if ever I forget his kindness to me at Keswick, may I die in a strait-waistcoat.

Tickler. What an idea!

Shepherd. Tak Mr Soothey in prose and verse, I ken nane but ane that's his equal.

North. Who's that?

Shepherd. No you, sir—for you canna write verse.—As for your prose, nane bangs it, serious or comic, ludicrous or shublime—but what can be the maitter wi' thae eisters? Mr Gurney! are you there again, sir, ye gentleman o' the press? For if you be, you may step out, now that the Noctes is drawin to a close, and partake o' the eisters.

North. James, you don't know S. T. Coleridge—do you? He writes but indifferent books, begging his pardon; witness his "Friend," his "Lay Sermons," and, latterly, his "Aids to Reflection;" but he becomes inspired by the sound of his own silver voice, and pours out wisdom like a sea. Had he a domestic Gurney, he might publish a Moral Essay, or a Theological Discourse, or a Metaphysical Disquisition, or a Political Harangue, every morning throughout the year during his lifetime.

Tickler. Mr Coleridge does not seem to be aware that he

[1] Sir Charles Grey was Chief Justice in Bengal, and afterwards Governor of Jamaica. He was a fellow-student and intimate associate of Professor Wilson's at Magdalen College, Oxford.

cannot write a book, but opines that he absolutely has written several, and set many questions at rest. There's a want of some kind or another in his mind; but perhaps when he awakes out of his dream, he may get rational and sober-witted, like other men, who are not always asleep.

Shepherd. The author o' "Christabel," and the "Auncient Mariner," had better just continue to see visions, and to dream dreams—for he's no fit for the wakin world.

North. All men should be suffered to take their own swing—for, divert them from their natural course, and you extinguish genius, never to be rekindled.

Shepherd. Are thae eisters never gaun to come ben!

North. James, who do you think will be the First Lord of the Treasury?

Shepherd. Come here, sir, and lay your lug close to mine—but swear you won't blab it. (*Whispers.*)

North. Right, James, you have hit it.—He is to be the Man.[1]

Tickler. Who? Canning, or Peel, or Robinson, or Bathurst, or Wellington—or——

Shepherd. I'll communicate the secret, *vivâ voce*, to nae ither man but Mr North; but if you like, I'll write the name doun wi' my keelivine pen, and seal up the paper wi' waux, no to be opened till after the nation has been informed o' the King's choice.

Tickler. Whew! what care I who's Prime Minister? The country has got into a way of going on by and of itself, just as comfortably without as with a ministry. A government's a mere matter of form.

North. Just so with Maga. On she goes, and on she would go, if editor and contributors were all asleep, nay, all dead and buried.

Tickler. No yawning, James,—a barn-door's a joke to such jaws.

North. Give us a song, my dear Shepherd—"Paddy o' Rafferty," or "Low doun i' the Broom," or "O Jeanie, there's naething to fear ye," or "Love's like a Dizziness," or "Rule Britannia," or "Aiken Drum," or——

Tickler. Beethoven, they say, is starving in his native

[1] Canning was the man. He was Premier from February 1827 until his death on the 8th of August 1827.

country, and the Philharmonic Society of London, or some other association with music in their souls, have sent him a hundred pounds to keep him alive—he is deaf, destitute, and a paralytic.—Alas! alas!

Shepherd. Whisht! I hear Mr Awmrose's tread in the transe!

"His verra foot has music in't
As he comes up the stair."

(*Enter* Mr Ambrose *and Assistants.*)

Hoo mony hunder eisters are there on the brod, Mr Awmrose?—Oh! ho! Three brods!—One for each o' us!—A month without an R has nae richt being in the year. Noo, gentlemen, let naebody speak to me for the niest half-hour. Mr Awmrose, we'll ring when we want the rizzers—and the tosted cheese—and the deevil'd turkey—Hae the kettle on the boil, and put back the lang haun o' the clock, for I fear this is Saturday nicht, and nane o' us are folk to break in on the Sabbath. Help Mr North to butter and bread,—and there, sir,—there's the vinnekar cruet. Pepper awa, gents.

XIV.

(JUNE 1827.)

Scene I.—Porch of Buchanan Lodge. Time,—Evening.

Mrs Gentle, Miss Gentle,[1] North, Shepherd, Colonel Cyril Thornton,[2] Tickler.

Shepherd. I just ca' this perfec' Paradise. Oh! Mem! but that's the natest knitting ever blessed the een o' man. Is't for a veil to your dochter's bonny face? I'm glad it's no ower deep, sae that it winna hide it a'thegither—for sure amang sic a party o' freens as this, the young leddy 'll forgie me for saying at ance, that there's no a mair beautifu' cretur in a' Scotland.

Mrs Gentle. See, Mr Hogg, how you have made poor Mary hang down her head—but you Poets—

Shepherd. Breathe and hae our beings in love, and delight in the fair and innocent things o' this creation. Forgie me, Miss Gentle, for bringing the blush to your broo—like sunlight on snaw—for I'm but a simple shepherd, and whiles says things I sudna say, out o' the very fulness of my heart.

Mrs Gentle. Mary, fetch my smaller shuttle from the parlour — it is lying, I believe, on one of the cushions of the yellow sofa. [Miss Gentle *retires.*

Shepherd. Oh! Mem! that my ain dochter may grow up,

[1] Mrs and Miss Gentle are purely fictitious characters.

[2] Captain Thomas Hamilton, an early contributor to *Blackwood's Magazine*, and author of the admirable novel *The Youth and Manhood of Cyril Thornton*, was the younger brother of Sir William Hamilton, Bart., Professor of Logic and Metaphysics in the University of Edinburgh. His other works are *Men and Manners in America*, and *Annals of the Peninsular Campaigns*. He died at Florence in 1842.

under the blessing o' God, sic a flower! I've often heard tell o' you and her—and o' Mr North's freenship o' auld for her father—

North. Hallo, James—there's a wasp running along your shoulder in the direction of your ear.

Shepherd. A wasp—say ye? Whilk shouther? Ding't aff, some o' ye. Wull nane o' ye either speak or stir? Whilk shouther, I say? Confoun' ye, Tickler—ye great heigh neerdo-weel, wunna ye say whilk shouther? Is't aff?

Tickler. Off! No, James, that it isn't. How it is pricking along, like an armed knight, up the creases of your neckcloth. Left chin—Shepherd.

Mrs Gentle. Allow me, Mr Hogg, to remove the unwelcome visitor. (Mrs Gentle *rises and scares the wasp with her handkerchief.*)

Shepherd. That's like a leddy, as you are. There's nae kindness like kindness frae the haun o' a woman.

Tickler. He was within an inch o' your ear, Hogg, and had made good his entrance, but for the entanglement of the dusty whisker.

Shepherd. That's no a word, sir, to speak afore a leddy. It's coorse. But you're wrang again, sir, for the wasp cudna hae made gude his entrance by that avenue, for my left lug's stuffed wi' cotton.

North. How happens it, my dear James, that, on coming to town, you are never without a cold? That country will kill you—we shall be losing you, James, some day, of a brain-fever.

Shepherd. A verra proper death for a poet. But it's just your ain vile, vapoury, thick, dull, yellow, brown, dead, drizzling, damned (beg your pardon, Mem) easterly haur o' Embro' that gies me the rheumatics. In the kintra I think naething o' daunderin awa to the holms, without my bannet, or onything round my chafts—even though it sud be raining—and the weather has nae ither effec' than to gar my hair grow.

North. You must have been daundering about a good deal lately then, my dear James, for I never saw you with such a crop of hair in my life.

Shepherd. It's verra weel for you that's bald to tauk about a crap o' hair. But the mair hair a man has on his head the better, as lang's it's touzy—and no in candle-wick fashion.

What say ye, Cornall? for, judging frae your ain pow, you're o' my opinion.

C. Cyril Thornton. I see, Mr Hogg, that we both patronise Macassar.

Shepherd. What? Macawser ile? Deevil a drap o't ever wat my weeg—nor never sall. It's stinkin stuff—as are a' the iles—and gies an unwholesome and unnatural greasy glimmer to ane's hair, just like sae muckle creesh.

C. Cyril Thornton. 'Pon my honour, my dear Mr Hogg, I never suspected you of a wig.

Shepherd. Hoots, man, I was metaphorical. It's a weeg o' nature's weavin. (*Re-enter* Miss Gentle, *with a small ivory shuttle in her hand.*) Come awa—come awa, Mem—here's an empty seat near me. (Miss Gentle *sits down beside the* Shepherd.) And I'll no praise your beauty ony mair, for I ken that maidens dinna like blushing, bonny as it makes them; but dinna think it was ony flattery—for gif it was the last word I was ever to speak in this warld, it was God's truth, but no the half o' the truth; and when ye gaed ben the house, I cudna help saying to your Leddy Mother, hoo happy and mair than happy would I be had I sic a dochter.

North. Would you like, James, that Miss Gentle should give us a few tunes on the piano?

Shepherd. Na, sir—I canna say that I should. Just let the young leddy sit still. Yet I'm just desperate fond o' music, Miss Gentle—and nae doubt, nae doubt, but thae wee, white, slender fingers, when they touch the spinnet, would wauken the notes, just as the rays o' licht wauken the flowers.

Mrs Gentle. My daughter has just had a dozen finishing lessons from Miss Yaniewicz—and I assure you does no discredit to her teacher.

Shepherd. I'll answer for her, that she disna do discredit to ony leevin soul on the face o' this earth——

North. You play the piano yourself a little, James, if I remember?

Shepherd. I used to do sae—but I'll defy the fingers o' ony man breathin to hae twa touches—ane for bane and the tither for thairm. The piawno and the fiddle are no compawtible. You've had some lessons, Mem, I think your mother was saying, frae Miss Yaniewicz?

Miss Gentle. Yes, sir.

Shepherd. My dear young leddy—I wush you wouldna gie

sic short answers—for you needna be feared o' onybody tiring o' that voice. Yet I dinna ken—for at times, after a' the ither birds hae been busy in the woods, amaist unheard by me as I lay in my plaid on a knowe, and singin as they aye do, bonnily, bonnily—my heart has gien a sudden stoun' o' uncommunicable delicht, just to hear but twa laigh, sweet, half-mournfu' notes o' the lintwhite in the broom, as if the sweet bird was afraid to hear its ain voice, yet couldna help sae expressin its happiness in that o' rejoicin nature. But tell me, Mrs Gentle, is that a white lace veil?

Mrs Gentle.—It is, Mr Hogg—but can you guess for whom? Mary shall work such another for yourself, if you be successful.

Shepherd. Me wi' a white lace veil on! My buck-teeth, as that impudent chiel Tickler ca's them, would cut a fearsome figure through a white lace veil.

Mrs Gentle. I see you cannot guess for whom, Mr Hogg—so I must tell you—It is for Mr North.

Shepherd. Haw, haw, haw!

Mrs Gentle (*with dignity*). I really envy you your high spirits, sir—it is a Midge-veil for Mr North, sir.

Shepherd. I ask your forgiveness, my dear madam—I ken lauchin's unco vulgar—but I canna aye help it—a Midge-veil for Mr North!

Mrs Gentle. You see it's little more than half finished—but if Mr North will permit me to show you how well it becomes him——

[Mrs Gentle *rises, and drops the midge-veil over* Mr North's *head and face.*

Shepherd. Weel, sic a contrivance! Much as I hae suffered in my day under midges, I never had genius for that discovery or invention! Mr North, sir, wull you let me tak the midge-veil intil my ain haun? I'll neither tear nor runkle 't.

Tickler. Don't intrust anything so perishable into such paws, North—are you mad?

Shepherd. That's geyan insultin—but oh, man, I only pity ye. Something's been gaun wrang at hame, and you're no yoursel. Let me see—this is the time for changing servants, and his kyuck[1] 'll be leavin him——

Mrs Gentle. Take the veil from my hand, Mr Hogg.

Shepherd. Thank you, Mem—everything you say, every step you tak, your sittin down, and your risin up 's a' sae like

[1] *Kyuck*—cook.

a leddy. There, Mem, hing't on my thoomb. Noo, let's see hoo't 'll look on anither kind o' head a'thegither.—(*Drops it with the utmost delicacy and tenderness over the auburn ringlets of* Miss Gentle.)—There! You hae a' o' ye seen a White Lily bending to the morning sunlicht, no through weakness or because its stalk is bruised or broken, but because it is the nature o' the flower sae ever to recline, when meekly haudin up its head to heaven—you hae a' o' ye seen a White Lily, I say, wi' a veil o' dewdraps let doun on its sweet-scented hair by the invisible hauns o' the whispering dawn—dewdrap after dewdrap melting away, till the day has at last left on its lustre but a reviving freshness—and the Flower, whom we poets call the Fair-and-well-Beloved, breathes and brightens afore our een but in its ain virgin innocence;—sic and siclike is the lady noo in presence—and may never heavier pressure be on her forehead than this airy veil, or that ane motionless and diamond-dropt, that, amang the singing o' birds, and the murmuring o' streams, and the glintin o' lichts, and the sailing o' shadows, fa's down on her silken snood, unfelt by the ringlets it embraces, when, in the sweet hour of prime, she gangs out a' by hersel into the tender calm, and gazes in delichted wonder on the woods and the waters and the mountains, a' giving glory for anither day o' time to their almichty Maker!

Mrs Gentle. Mr Hogg, Mr North requested me to take charge of the making of his primrose-wine this season, and I used the freedom of setting aside a dozen bottles for your good lady at Altrive.

Shepherd. Did ye do sae indeed, Mem? I'm sure that was being maist kind and thochtfu'. I never kent, wad you believe me, till Mr North sent me out your letter last spring, geein instructions hoo to pu' and preserve them unfaded, that wine could be made o' primroses. Ony gift frae the like o' ane like you, Mem, wull be maist acceptable; and nane but prime favourites sall ever pree't, and them only leddies that kens hoo to value the mistress; but, for my ain pairt, you'll pardon me for sayin't, but, as sure's death, I'll no like it.

North. Will you try a glass of it now, James?

Shepherd. I'm easy. But Miss Gentle 'll pree't. Primrose-wine is just fit for siccan lips. My dear lassie—na, that's being ower familiar—my lovely leddy, wull I ca' Peter to bring a bottle?

Miss Gentle. It is, I think, sir, the pleasantest of all our home-made wines, and I shall be glad to drink a glass of it with you, Mr Hogg.

Shepherd. Peter—Peter—Peter—Pate—I say, Pate!—is the man deaf? But I'll gang and tell him mysel. Is the kitchen to the right or the left haun? I forgot, he'll be in his ain bit neuk o' a butler's pantry.

Tickler. Heavens! Hogg, you have roared the thrush out of its nest.

Shepherd. Is there a mavis's nest amang the honeysuckles?

Miss Gentle. In the Virgin's Bower, sir.

Shepherd. Virgin's Bower, indeed—thou maist innocent o' God's creturs! But has't young anes, or is she only sittin? (*Enter Peter.*) Peter, my braw man, Mr North is ordering you to bring but[1] a bottle o' primrose-wine. (*Exit Peter.*) Waes me, Mr North, but I think Peter's lookin auld-like.

North. Like master like man.

C. Cyril Thornton. Nay, nay, sir—I see little or no change on you since I sold out, and that, as you know, was the year in which the allied armies were in Paris.

Shepherd. Weel—I declare, Cornnall, that I'm glad to hear your voice again—for, as far as I ken you on ower short an acquaintance, I wush it had been langer—but plenty o' life, let us howp, is yet afore us. You hae but only ae faut—and that's no a common ane—you dinna speak half aneuch as muckle's your freens could desire. Half aneuch did I say—na, no a fourth pairt—but put a pen intil your haun, and you ding the best o' us. O man! but your Memoirs o' your Youth and Manhood's maist intereestin. I'm no speaking as a critic, and hate phrasin onybody—but yon's no a whit inferior, as a whole, to my ain "Perils."[2]

C. Cyril Thornton. Allow me to assure you, Mr Hogg, that I am fully sensible both of the value and the delicacy of the compliment. Many faults in style and composition your practised and gifted eye could not fail to detect, or I ought rather, in all humility to say, many such faults must have forced themselves upon it; but I know well, at the same time, that the genius which delights the whole world by its own creations, is ever indulgent to the crudities of an ordinary mind, inheriting but feeble powers from nature, and those, as you know, little indebted to art, during an active life that afforded but too few opportunities for their cultivation.

Shepherd. Feeble poo'rs! Ma faith, Cornnall, there's nae

[1] Bring *but* is bring *out*, as bring *ben* is bring *in*. See *ante*, p. 222, note 2.

[2] *The Three Perils of Man*: 3 vols. *The Three Perils of Woman*: 3 vols.

symptoms o' feeble poo'rs yonner—you're a strong-thinkin, strong-feelin, strong-writin, strong-actin, and let me add, notwithstandin the want o' that airm that's missin, strong-lookin man as is in a' his Majesty's dominions—either in the ceevil or military depairtment—and the cleverest fallow in a' Britain micht be proud to father yon three volumms. Phrasin's no my faut—it lies rather the ither way. They're just perfeckly capital—and what I never saw afore in a' my born days, and never howp to see again, as sure as ocht,[1] the thrid volumm's the best o' the three,—the story, instead o' dwinin awa intil a consumption, as is the case wi' maist lang stories that are seen gaun backwarts and forrits, no kennin what to do wi' themsels, and losin their gate, as sune as it gets dark—grows stouter and baulder, and mair confident in itsel as it proceeds,

Veerace aqueerit yeundo,[2]

till at last it soums up a' its haill poo'rs for a satisfactory catastrophe and gangs aff victoriously into the land o' Finis in a soun' like distant thunner, or, to make use o' a martial simile, sin' I'm speakin to a sodger, like that o' a discharge o' the great guns o' artillery roaring thanks to the welkin for twa great simultawneous victories bath by sea and land, on ane and the same day.

North. James, allow me, in the name of Colonel Thornton, to return you his very best thanks for your speech.

Shepherd. Ay—ay—Mr North—my man—ye needna, after that, sir, try to review it in *Blackwood;* or gin you do, hae the grace to avow that I gied ye the germ o' the article, and sen' out to Altrive in a letter the twenty guineas a-sheet.

North. It shall be done[3]—James.

Shepherd. Or rather suppose—to save yourself the trouble o' writin, which I ken you detest, and me the postage—you just tak out your red-turkey[4] the noo, and fling me ower a twenty-pun' Bank post bill—and, for the sake o' auld lang syne, you may keep the shillins to yoursel.

North. The evening is beginning to get rather cold—and I feel the air, from the draught of that door, in that painful crick of my neck——

Shepherd. That's a' a flam. Ye hae nae crick o' your neck. O sir, you're growin unco hard—just a verra Joseph Hume.

[1] *Ocht*—aught, anything.

[2] Vires acquirit eundo.

[3] *Cyril Thornton* was reviewed by Professor Wilson in *Blackwood's Magazine*, No. CXXVII.

[4] Pocket-book.

Speak o' siller, that's to say o' the payin o't awa, and you're as deaf's a nit; but be there but a whusper o' payin't intil your haun, and you're as gleg o' hearin as a mowdiewarp.[1] Isna that true?

North. Too true, James—I feel that I am the victim of a disease—and of a disease, too, my Shepherd, that can only be cured by death—old-age—we septuagenarians are all misers.

Shepherd. O struggle against it, sir! As you love me—struggle against it! Dinna let your imagination settle on the stocks. Pass the fauldin-doors o' the Royal Bank wi' your een shut—sayin a prayer.—Dear me!—dear me! what's the maitter wi' Mrs Gentle? Greetin, I declare, and wipin her een wi' Mr North's ain Bandana!—What for are ye greetin, Mrs Gentle? Hae ye gotten a sudden pain in your head? If sae, ye had better gang up-stairs, and lie doun.

Mrs Gentle (*in tears, and with a faint sob*). Mr Hogg—you know not that man's—that noble—generous—glorious man's heart. But for him, what, where, how might I now have been—and my poor orphan daughter there at your side? Orphan I may well call her — for when her brave father, the General, fell——

Shepherd. There's nae punishment ower severe to inflick on me, Mem. But may I never stir aff this firm,[2] if I wasna a' in jeest — but there's naething mair dangerous than ill-timed daffin—I weel ken that—and this is no the first time I hae wounded folks' feelins wi' nae mair thocht or intention o' doin sae than—this angel at my side. Tell your mother, my sweet Miss Gentle, no to be angry or sorry ony langer — for his heart, for a' my silly nonsense, lies open afore me, and it's fertile wi' the growth o' a' the virtues, Faith, Hope, and Charity — especially the last, which is, in good truth, but ae name for a' the Three.

Mrs Gentle (*Peter entering with tea-tray*). Mr Hogg, do you prefer black or green tea?

Shepherd. Yes—yes—Mem—black and green tea. But I'm taukin nonsense. Green—Mem—green—mak it strong—and I'll drink five cups that I may lie awauk a' nicht, and repent bringin the saut tear into your ee by my waur than stupid nonsense about our benefactor.

Miss Gentle. Peter, take care of the kettle.

[1] *Mowdiewarp*—mole. [2] *Firm*—form, bench.

Shepherd. You're ower kind, Miss Gentle, to bid Peter tak care o' the kettle on my account. There's my legs stretched out, that the stroop may hiss out it's boilin het steam on my shins, by way o' penance for my sin. I'll no draw a worsted thread through a single ane o' a' the blisters.

Miss Gentle. What a beautiful colour, Mr Hogg! One might think that the primroses had melted, and that this is the dew.

Shepherd (*drinking and bowing to Miss Gentle*). Ma sentiment—" May we have in our airms whom we love in our hearts." You wudna like, I ken, just to pronounce thae words after me, but you'll no refuse the feelin. It's no innocence like yours that fears a bit leaf floating on the glass pledged to love and friendship.

Tickler. You have not told us, my dear Hogg, how the country is looking this late spring.

Shepherd. Green as a cameleon could desire. The second snaw-storm gied a' things a drawback as they were hastenin on into spring; but it had cleared the air, which immediately grew caller—and mair than caller—fu' at times o' a simmer heat, and the change within the week afore last was like that o' mawgic.

Miss Gentle. I fear that second snow-storm, sir, must have been fatal to many of the lambs, for, being unlooked for at such a season, the shepherds, perhaps, had not time to bring them from the hill.[1]

Shepherd. It's like you, Mem, to be sorry for the bit lambs. But you'll be happy to hear, baith for their sakes and that o' the farmers, the butchers too, and genteel families in-by here in Embro' and the sooburbs, that there wasna five score starved or smoored[2] in the twa haill parishes o' Ettrick and Yarrow.

North. And the fruit-trees, James?

Shepherd. The jergonelle on Eldenhope's[3] barn-en' is sic a sight wi' blossoms as I never saw. Our ain auld cherry-tree that ye threeped upon me was dead, might hae been seen miles aff in its glory; and, to be sure, when you stood close till't, it was like a standard tree o' pearlins and diamonds, brichtning the knowe, and makin the tawry and tauted sheep that hap-

[1] There was a severe snow-storm in the spring of 1827, which caused heavy losses to the sheep-farmers in many parts of Scotland.

[2] *Smoored*—smothered. [3] A farm in the vicinity of Mount Benger.

pened to be lyin aneath it, look as if they had naething to do near sic a glorious and super-earthly vision. A' things else I aye think, baith animate and inanimate, even the bonniest amang them, get eclipsed into an obscure and common-day-like appearance, when stannin aside a great fruit-tree in full blossom. But it's only then that they're glorious—at least in this cleemat—for though ripe cherries are just excessive refreshin the niest morn after toddy, and the delicious sappiness o' the jergonelle wull no bear disputin, on the tree baith fruits hae but a mean appearance; the ane round and poutin like a kind o' lip I never had ony great fancy tae, and the tither lang, daft-lookin things like taps and peeries, as indeed in a sense they are; and although multitudinous, yet not in their numbers sublime, for you ken weel aneuch that the servants hae taken on wagers on the maitter, and that, exceptin them that's plucked stownways, you will ken to a nicety how many dizzens turns out to be in the hale Tot.

Miss Gentle. I have never lived one single Spring in the country, Mr Hogg, since I was a mere child; but I remember how much more beautiful I used to think it than any other season of the year. All things were so full of gladness and hope; and day after day, the very earth itself, as it grew greener and greener, seemed also to grow happier and more happy.

Shepherd. God bless your dear soul for thinking sae, and God bless these bricht een for seein it was sae; and God bless your red lips for speakin o' the Spring wi' breath and soun' as sweet and as musical as that o' it's ain blooming braes and murmuring waters.

Miss Gentle. I am told that late Springs are generally the best for the country, and that thought and that feeling must make them also the most beautiful, Mr Hogg.

Shepherd. You speak like yersel, Mem. The maist beautifu o' a' Springs, my dear Mem, is, whan early on in the season the weather has been mild and warm, wi' fleein shoors, and mony glintin hoors o' sunshine, and whan there comes, a' on a sudden, a raitherly sherp frost, but no sae sherp either as to nip — only to retaird the genial strife o' the poo'rs o' Natur, a' anxious to get burstin out into leafy life. The verra instant that that week or fortnicht o' a' things observable to ee or mind's ee stannin still is ower, and the wast

wund again begins to waver awa the cluds into shapes like wee bit shielins and huts, and shiftin aiblins at sunset to anither airt—say the south, bigs them up roun' and aboon his disk, into towers, and temples, and cathedrals,—then I say, a' at ance, the trees unfauld themselves like a banner, or as you micht suddenly unfauld that fan—the yearth, that has been lookin greyish and gloomyish, wi' a' the roots o' garse like mouses' nests, puts on without warnin her green cymar, like a fairy bride gaun to be married, and hearin the sweet jingle o' the siller bells on the mane o' the steed o' her pretty paramour—up wi' first ae lark and then anither, no fearin to be lost in a cloud, but singing a' the while in the verra hairt o't, and then visible again as weel as audible, speckin the blue sky—that's the Spring, Mem, that's the Spring for me,—ae sic day—ay, ae sic hoor—ay, ae sic minnut o' Natur's book's worth fifty volumms o' prentit prose and poetry, and micht weel require a giftit and a pious commentautor. But I'm waxin wearisome——

Miss Gentle. Wearisome, Mr Hogg! Pardon me for venturing to name you so, but the Ettrick Shepherd never could be wearisome to any one possessed of common—

Shepherd. It'll make us a' mair than happy—me, and the mistress, and the weans, and a' our humble household, if, Mrs Gentle, you, and your dutifu' dochter, 'll come out to Yarrow wi' Mr North, his verra first visit. Say, Mem, that you'll do't. Oh! promise you'll do't, and we'll a' be happy as the twenty-second o' June is lang.

Mrs Gentle. I promise it, Mr Hogg, most cheerfully. The Peebles Fly——

Miss Gentle. My mother will make proper arrangements, Mr Hogg, in good time.

Shepherd. And then, indeed, there will be a Gentle Shepherdess in Yarrow.

North. A vile pun.

Shepherd. Pun? Heaven be praised, I never made a pun in my life. It's no come to that o't wi' me yet. A man's mind must be sair rookit o' thochts before he begins in his dotage to play upon words. But then, I say, there will be a shepherdess in Yarrow; and the author o' *Lichts and Shadows*,[1]

[1] *The Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life.* By Professor Wilson.

who imagines every red-kuted[1] hizzie he meets to be a shepherdess——

Miss Gentle. Pardon me, sir, the *Lights and Shadows* are extremely beau——

Shepherd. Nae mair sugar, Mem, in ma cup; the last was rather ower sweet. What was ye gaun to say, Miss Gentle? But nae matter—it's fixed that you're comin out to Altrive in the Peebles Fly, and——

Miss Gentle. The *Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life*——

Shepherd. I agree with you. They certainly are. Nobody admires the author's genius mair than I do; but——What the deevil's become o' Mr Tickler? I never missed him till this moment.

North. Yonder he is, James, rolling down the hill all his length with my gardener's children! happy as any imp among them—and worrying them in play, like an old tiger acting the amiable and paternal with his cubs, whom at another hour he would not care to devour.

Shepherd. Look at him, wi' his heels up i' the air, just like a horse rollin i' the garse on bein' let out o' the harnesh! I wush he mayna murder some o' the weans in his unwieldy gambols.

North. 'Tis the veriest great boy, Colonel Thornton! Yet as soon as he has got rid of the urchins, you will see him come stalking up the gravel walk, with his hands behind his back, and his face as grave as a monk's in a cloister, till, flinging himself into a chair, with a long sigh he will exclaim against the vanities of this weary world, and, like the melancholy Jacques himself, moralise on that calf yonder—which by the way has pulled up the peg, and set off at a scamper over my beds of tulips. Mr Tickler—hallo—will you have the goodness, now that you are on your legs, to tell the children to look after that young son of a cow——

Tickler (*running up out of breath*). He has quite the look of a Puma—see how he handles his tail, and kicks up his heels like a D'Egville. Jem—Tommy—Bauldy, my boys,—the calf—the calf—the hunt's up—halloo, my lads—halloo!

[*Off they all set.*

Shepherd. Faith, I've aneuch o' rinnin after calves at hame.

[1] *Red-kuted*—red-ankled.

Here I'm on a holiday, and I'll sit still. What's a Puma, Mr North? I never heard tell o' a beast wi' that name before. Is it outlandish or indigenous?

North. The Puma, James, is the Couguar of Buffon—the American Lion; and you will see a drawing of the animal by Lizars in the first number of James Wilson's[1] beautiful *Illustrations of Zoology;* or the animal itself in a cage in the College. Your friend Captain Lord Napier brought it home in the Diamond Frigate, and presented it to Professor Jameson.[2]

Shepherd. Are nane o' the bars o' the cage lowse, think ye? For wild beasts are no safe in colleges; and it would cause a sair stramash gin it got out o't, and entered the Divinity Hall.

North. It is at present of a very gentle disposition; and as a proof of its unwillingness to break the peace, Mr Wilson mentions, that while in London it made its escape into the street during the night, but allowed itself to be taken up by a watchman, without offering even a show of resistance.

Miss Gentle. Its motions, even in its narrow cage, are wildly graceful; and when let out to range about a large room, it manifests all the elegant playfulness of the cat, without any of its alleged treachery. Mr James Wilson was so good as to take me to see it, and told me, from Cuvier's *History of the Animal Kingdom*, a striking story of one of its wild brethren in the woods.

Shepherd. Wull ye hae the goodness to tell us the story, my bonny dear? Onything in the way o' a story maun intereest anent a Puma—a Couguar o' Buffon—and an American Lion.

Miss Gentle. Two Hunters went out in quest of game on the Katsgill Mountains, each armed with a gun, and accompanied by a dog. Shortly after separating, one heard the other fire, and, agreeable to a compact, hastened to his comrade. After searching for him for some time without effect, he found his dog dead and dreadfully torn. His eyes were then suddenly directed, by the growl of a Puma, to the large branch of a tree where he saw the animal couching on the body of a man, and directing his eyes towards himself, apparently hesitating whether to make an attack, or relinquish its prey and

[1] See *ante*, p. 295, note.

[2] Robert Jameson, for fifty years Professor of Natural History in the University of Edinburgh, died in 1854.

take to flight. The Hunter discharged his piece and wounded the animal mortally, when both it and the dead body of the man fell to the ground together from the tree. The surviving dog then flew at the prostrate beast, but a single blow from its paw laid the dog dead by its side. In this state of things, finding that his comrade was dead, and that there was still danger in approaching the wounded animal, the man prudently retired, and with all haste brought several persons to the spot. The unfortunate Hunter, the Puma, and both the dogs, were all lying dead together.

Shepherd. Thank ye, Mem—a very bonny forenoon's sport indeed. Oh! but ye tell a story weel; and I'm thinkin you'll be unco fond o' Natural History and Zoology, and the like——

Miss Gentle. I lay claim to but very slight and superficial knowledge on any subject, sir; but it is with great interest that I study the habits and instincts of animals; and this anecdote I copied into my commonplace-book out of Mr Griffith's translation of Cuvier, so that I daresay the most of the very words have remained in my memory.

Shepherd. And Mr James Wilson, the great Naturalist, author o' *Illustrations of Zoology*, tyuk you wi' him into a room where a Puma was gambollin out o' his cage—did he?

Miss Gentle. He did so, sir; but——

Shepherd. Nae buts, my dear Mem. I sall gie him his dixies for sic a rash ac', the first time I dine wi' him out yonner at Woodville. He may endanger his ain life wi' Pumas, or Crocodiles, or Crakens, or ony ither carnivorous cannibals, but he shanna tak young leddies in wi' him intil their dens.

Miss Gentle. We did not go into the cage, Mr Hogg——

Shepherd. Didna ye? Yet I've seen sic things dune. By payin a sixpence, you was alloo'd to gang into the Lion's den at Wommell's; and it was no easy maitter to believe my een, when I rubbit them and saw, first ae nursery-maid, and then anither, gang in wi' their maisters' and mistresses' bairns in their arms—the Lion a' the while lickin his paws, and seemin raither dour and dissatisfied wi' the intrusion. Suppose he had eaten a wean, what could the slut hae possibly said for hersel when she tyuk hame only Maggy and Mary, and no puir wee Tam, who had only been charged sixpence

for seein his last Show?—But I'll no press the argument ony furder. You'll maybe hae read my "Shepherd's Calendar" in the Magazine, Mem?

Miss Gentle (*hesitating*). I have, I believe, sir, read all of it that relates to the habits and instincts of animals.

Shepherd. And a' the rest, too, I see; but I'll no press the point. My pen sometimes rins awa wi' me, and——

Mrs Gentle. Mary often reads the *Queen's Wake*, Mr Hogg; and can, indeed, say "Kilmeny," and some of the other Tales, by heart.

Shepherd. Oh! but it would make me a proud and a happy man to hear her receet only as mony as a dizzen lines.

Mrs Gentle (*nodding to her daughter*). Mary!

Miss Gentle—

> "Bonny Kilmeny's gane up the glen,
> But it isna to meet Duneira's men."

[*The Calf gallops by in an exhausted state, tail-on-end,—with* Tickler, *and* Jem, Tommy, *and* Bauldy, *the gardener's children, in full cry. The recitation of "Kilmeny" is interrupted.*

Shepherd. I canna lauch at that — I canna lauch at that; and yet I dinna ken either—yonner's Tickler a' his length, haudin fast by the tail, and the calf — it's a desperate strong beast for sae young a ane, and a quey[1] too — harlin him through the shrubbery. Haw! haw! haw! haw! — Oh, Cornall! but I'm surprised no to hear you lauchin—for my sides is like to split.

C. Cyril Thornton. It is a somewhat singular part of my idiosyncrasy, Mr Hogg, that I never feel the slightest impulse to laugh aloud. But I can assure you, that I have derived from the view-holla the most intense excitation of the midriff. I never was more amused in my life; and you had, within my very soul, a silent accompaniment to your guffaw.

North. These, Cyril, are not the indolent gardens of Epicurus. You see we indulge occasionally in active, even violent exercises.

C. Cyril Thornton. There is true wisdom, Mr North, in that extraordinary man's mind. It has given me much pleasure to think that Mr Tickler should have remembered my name

[1] *Quey*—a young cow.

—for I never had the honour of being in his company but once—when I was at the University of Glasgow, in the house of my poor old grand uncle, Mr Spreull.[1] Mr Tickler had carried some important mercantile case through your law-courts here for Mr Spreull, and greatly gratified the old gentleman by coming west without ceremony to take pot-luck. It was with no little difficulty that we got through dinner, for I remember Girzy was so utterly confounded by his *tout-ensemble*, his stature, his tie—for he sported one in those days—his gestures, his gesticulations, his jokes, his waggery and his wit, all of a kind new to the West, that she stood for many minutes with the tureen of hotch-potch supported against her breast, and all her grey goggles fascinated as by a serpent, till poor old Mr Spreull cursed her in his sternest style to set it down on the table, that he might ask a blessing.

[TICKLER, JEM, TOMMY, *and* BAULDY *re-cross the front of the Porch in triumph with the captive Calf, and disappear in the rear of the premises.*

Shepherd. He'll be laid up for a week noo, on account o' this afternoon's stravagin without his hat, and a' this rowin ower braes wi' weans, and a' this gallopin and calf-huntin. He'll be a' black and blue the morn's morning, and sae stiff that he'll no be able to rise.

North. If you please, my dear Cyril, here comes Peter with the green wax-taper, as you say, James,

"Like ae single wee starnie that shines its lane!"

[PETER *removes the tea-tray, and puts down the taper.*

Shepherd. Preserve me! Mr North, you and the Cornnall's no gaun to yoke to the cigars in the Porch amang leddies?

C. Cyril Thornton. Do not, I request you, Mr Hogg, give way to needless distress on account of the fair ladies. These my cigars are from the Havannah; their peculiar fragrance will scarcely be distinguished in the evening air, among the other sweet scents floating from the flower-garden. At Cadiz, where I resided several weeks, after the Battle of Barossa, I could not but at first admire the Spanish ladies as they delicately lipped the cigar, and all the while murmured in my ear their sweet unintelligible Castilian speech.

[1] One of the characters in *Cyril Thornton.*

Shepherd. Cadiz is no in Castile?

C. Cyril Thornton. I'm sorry for it, sir, but I cannot help it. Miss Gentle—a cigar?

Miss Gentle. I know not how to light it.

Shepherd. Gie me't, and I'll licht it for you at the pint o' the Cornnall's.

Miss Gentle (*tripping across to Mr North*). I will light it at my own dear father's.

North. Kiss my forehead, child.

[Miss Gentle *does so, lights the cigar at Mr North's, and returns to her seat beside the Shepherd.*

Mrs Gentle. Mary, we must bid Mr North and his friends good-night. You know we are engaged at ten,—

"And yon bright star has risen to warn us home."

Shepherd. What's the hurry? what's the hurry? But I see you're gaun, sae I needna try to keep you. I like freens that stays to the verra last moment they can, without hinting a word, and then glides awa in the gloamin towards their ain hames. The Cornnall 'll bide with Mr North, but I'll——

Mrs Gentle. There is a door, Mr Hogg, in the boundary-wall, between Buchanan Lodge and Trinity, and we can pay our visits without going round by the road. Instead of a mile of dust, we have thus not above five hundred yards of greensward. Farewell.

North. Farewell.

Shepherd. Faur ye weel, faur ye weel—God bless you baith—faur ye weel—noo be sure no to forget your promise to bring Miss Mary out wi' ye to Ettrick.

Miss Gentle (*smiling*). In the Peebles Fly.

Shepherd. Na, your father, as ye ca'd him, when ye gied his auld wrinkled forehead a kiss, 'll bring you to the Forest in his ain cotch-and-four. Faur ye weel—God bless you baith—faur ye weel.

C. Cyril Thornton. Ladies, I wish you good evening. Mrs Gentle, the dews are falling; allow me to throw my fur cloak over you and Miss Gentle; it is an ancient affair, but of the true Merino.—You flatter me by accepting it.

[*Covers Mother and Daughter with his military cloak, and they vanish.*

North. Now, James, a single jug of toddy.

Shepherd. What! each?

North. Each. There comes Tickler, as grave's a judge—make no allusion to the chase. (TICKLER *rejoins the party.*) But it is chilly, so let us go into the parlour. I see Peter has had the sense to light the candles—and there he goes with a pan of charcoal.

Scene II.—The Pitt Parlour.

NORTH, COLONEL CYRIL THORNTON, SHEPHERD, TICKLER.

Tickler. The Bowl! The Bowl! The Bowl!

Shepherd. The Jug! The Jug! The Jug!

Tickler. The bonny blue gold-rimmed Bowl, deep as Compensation Pond,[1] needing not all night any replenishment, and ebbing down so imperceptibly, that the cheated soul sees not the increasing line of dry shore!

Shepherd. The beautafu' brown silver-lipped Jug, profound as a well, yet aft-times during the short night demanding replenishment, and ebbing sae obviously, that every soul that kens what he's about at all, soon sees that there's no aboon ither twa glasses lying like cauld dregs at the bottom!

Tickler. The Sun-like Bowl!

Shepherd. The Star-like Jug!

Tickler. That fixed in the centre of the System——

Shepherd. That revolving round the circumference o' the System——

Tickler. Sheds light and heat.

Shepherd. Sheds light and heat.

North. Benignant provision made for *mortalia ægra*,

> "At the close of the day, when the hamlet is still,
> And mortals the sweets of forgetfulness prove."

How do you vote, Colonel?

C. Cyril Thornton. Why, in the very unsettled state of the Government, I am free to confess, that I am unwilling to give any pledge to my sole constituent, the Country, which my conscience afterwards might not suffer me to redeem.

[1] A large reservoir among the Pentland Hills, constructed to *compensate* the mills on the Esk for the loss of the Crawley springs, from which Edinburgh is now supplied with water.

Shepherd. I dinna understand that equivocation, or tergiversation, as it is ca'd, at a'. Wull you answer me ae single question?

C. Cyril Thornton. Mr Hogg, short as our friendship has been—and I hope I may call the right honourable Shepherd my friend——

Shepherd. You may do that—you may do that—rax ower your arm, and shake hands across the table. Wull ye answer me a single question?

C. Cyril Thornton (*addressing himself to* Mr North). Short, sir, as——

Shepherd. That's really ower provoking, Mr Cornnall Cyril Thornton, Esquire,—Bowl or Jug?

C. Cyril Thornton. Both.

Shepherd. Ay, that's answerin like a man as you are, every inch o' you—but what for roar sae loud? We're no a' deaf at this side o' the house.

C. Cyril Thornton. Were it not that the name is ugly and ominous, I should propose a coalition of parties, on the basis of mutual concession.

Shepherd. No need o' concessions—confound concessions[1]—Whig and Tory may meet ane anither at the half-way house, and sit down to a Conciliation denner—but as sune as the strong drink operates, the fause friends 'll begin to glower first suspiciously, and then savagely, at ane anither—the cowards 'll egg on the crouse to fecht—them wi' glib tongues in their heads 'll keep gabblin about principles and consistency—they'll no be lang o' ca'in ane anither names a' throughither,

[1] On Lord Liverpool's retirement from the Premiership early in 1827, the difficulty of forming a ministry, mainly arising out of a diversity of sentiment on the question of Catholic Emancipation, was almost insuperable. A united anti-Catholic Administration was found to be unattainable; and the only alternative was to reconstruct the Government on the former plan, in which the Catholic question was not made a Cabinet measure. But Mr Canning, whose pro-Catholic partialities were decided, refused to accept any office but that of Prime Minister. To this he was ultimately promoted; but nearly all his former colleagues deserted him. He was thus thrown almost entirely on Whig and Radical support. This coalition between the Canningites and the Whigs constituted "the mutual concessions" so indignantly glanced at in the text. The state of parties was not improved by the death of Mr Canning in August 1827. His genius had to some extent thrown a lustre over a coalition which had no other redeeming quality to show.

renegate, apostate, ratical, yultra, and everything else that's infamous and fearsome—till feenally there's a battle-royal, a clourin o' heads and a beatin o' bottoms; while the bars and benches are fleein up and doun, and nae man, sic is the colleshangy, rippet, and stramash, can be sure whether he's knocked down or no by a new freen or an auld enemy, fairly by the clenched fist, or by some sharp instrument, treacherously concealed within the palm of the hand—till the haill kintra-side, being scandaleezed at sic nefaurious behaviour, rise up like ae man, and kickin the heterogeneous mass o' inconsistent combatants out o' doors, pu' doun, out o' verra rage, the halfway-house itsel, alias the Conciliation, alias the Accommodation tavern, no leaving sae muckle as a single stane to tell where the clay-biggin stood.

[*The sliding-doors run into the wall, and* TICKLER *enters, with the Punch-Bowl, christened "Leviathan"*—PETER *close behind with the "Baltic" Jug.*

C. Cyril Thornton. The transition from a Youth of cold Glasgow Punch, to a Manhood of Edinburgh hot toddy, has in it something pleasant and mournful to the soul.

Shepherd. Let's finish the Jug first—and, Peter, my man, if you would just rug that green cloth aff the wee circular table in the window, and cover up the mouth o' the Bowl wi't, I wad be muckle obliged to you. It'll keep in the steam. That's it—it just fits. The circumferences o' the twa are just equal to ane anither.

North. Take the hips from me. THE KING!

Omnes (*stantes*). Hip—hip—hip—hurra—hurra—hurra.—Hip—hip—hip—hurra—hurra—hurra.—Hip—hip—hip—hurra—hurra—hurra!!!

Tickler. Suppose that in room of these glasses, that seem very fragile in the stalk, we substitute tumblers?

C. Cyril Thornton. I, for one, shall not make any "factious opposition" to that motion.

Shepherd. Nor me neither; but let it be counted a bumper, gif the toddy reaches up to the heather-sprig.

North. If ever I accept a seat in the Cabinet, it must be accompanied with Place.

Tickler. On no other condition will I accede or adhere to any Administration.

Shepherd. Do you think, sirs, that Mr Canning should hae telt his freens that Brumm had made him an overture o' the Whigs?

North. How can you ask the question, James? Certainly.

Tickler. Unquestionably.

C. Cyril Thornton. No doubt he ought, Mr Hogg.

Shepherd. Weel, then—ought he to try to carry the Catholic Question?

Omnes. Yes.

Shepherd. Wull he try?

Omnes. Cannot say.

Shepherd. But wull the King and country let him?

Omnes. No.

Shepherd. What must he do then?

Omnes. Go out.

North. Nothing, my dear James, as you well know, ever prospered long, even in this wicked world, but plain-dealing. Public and private morality are not to the outward eye the same—for the colouring is different. But essentially they are one—and every attempt made to separate them recoils on the head of the schemers, and strikes them all to the earth.

Tickler. All the speechification of all the most eloquent men in England will be as ineffectual to prove that the two great parties in the State are virtually the same, as the drivel of a slavering idiot, to convince you or me that black is white, by holding up in his hands a black crow and a white dove, and muttering with a loud laugh, that he found them both sitting in one nest.

C. Cyril Thornton. I profess myself, as one of the old Whigs, hostile to the present arrangement. Some conversation passed between my Lord Grey and myself, about a month ago, and I am proud to think that his Lordship so far honoured the humble individual who now addresses you, as to embody some of his opinions and sentiments in his late admirable speech in the Upper House.

North. One noble Lord declares he will support the Ministry, because it is to be guided by the principles of Lord Liverpool —and another noble Lord, equally sapient, and above suspicion, declares he will do so, because it is not. Between these two views of the subject are some score of shadings, those immediately adjacent to each other pretty much alike; but

compare those about the middle with each extreme point, and you will observe that it is a bright administration, constructed, not so much on rainbow as on patchwork principles. We defy you to tell the pattern. Here a graceful and elegant person[1] —buttoned to the chin—with one hand in his breast, just above his heart—and the other outstretched in oratorial action. Here an honest old woman, leaning on her staff, and contrite for her factious resignation, returning to retake her mite out of the Treasury.[2] Here England's Pride, and Westminster's Glory,[3] the terror of the borough-mongers, and friend to Parliaments accompanying the green earth but on one revolution round the sun, supporting on his shoulders a member lineally descended from the architect who contracted to build the Temple of Solomon, and twice convicted of bribery and corruption in an attempt, nefarious by any means, to effect a lodgment in St Stephen's Chapel for seven solar years. There a mild Whig, of middle age, ranging through his Majesty's Woods and Forests. Here a keen old citra-ultra Whig-Tory leering out of a glass-window in the character of Mat-o'-the-Mint.[4] There one[5] who erst frowned terrible as Satan (I look down at his feet, but see no, &c.)

"Like Teneriffe or Atlas unremoved,"

converted into Raphael, "the affable Archangel," but soon to be made to resume his native shape at the touch of some Ithuriel's spear. Here a rabble rout of Radicals, with axes and pitch-smeared firebrands under their cloaks, waiting the word to hew and burn. While on the very edge, and at one corner of the patchwork—instead of in the centre—stands a Throne some few degrees declined—and sitting there the Shadow of one who the likeness of a kingly crown hath on—and who, with a countenance more in sorrow than in anger, waves a reluctant, but not a lasting farewell to six faithful servants—one holding in his hand the Balance of Justice,[6] true and steady, even to a grain of dust—and another the sword of Victory,[7] with the hilt fixed, but not fastened to the scabbard.

Shepherd. What, in the name o' Satan and a' his Saunts, can be the riddle-me-ree o' that allegory? The toddy surely

[1] Canning. [2] Lord Bexley. [3] Sir Francis Burdett.
[4] Tierney. [5] Brougham. [6] Eldon. [7] Wellington.

canna hae taen the head o' him already—for we haena drank half-a-dizzen o' thae rather-aneath-the-middle-sized tumblers. Mr North, you talked at tea-time o' me deein o' a brain fivver—but I'm fearin it's flown to your ain head, and that you're forced to be obedient, whether you wull or no, to a species o' ravin.

(Tickler *sings.*)

Let's all get fou together,
Together, together,
Let's all get fou together,
Ye ho, ye ho, ye ho!
See how it runs down his gizzard,
His gizzard, his gizzard,
See how it runs down his gizzard,
Ye ho, ye ho, ye ho!

Omnes. Encore—encore—encore!

Tickler. No—I never do the same thing over again, now, on the same night. Encoring should be coughed down by general expectoration.[1]

C. Cyril Thornton. I often feel for that nightingale, Miss Paton,[2] who, after seeming to pour out in thick delicious warble, nay, rather in a stream of sound, bold, bright, beautiful, and free, her very soul—is forced, fair Christian though she be, to curtsy to the Heathen Gods, and laying her white hand upbraidingly on her bosom, to recall it from its flight, and let it die once more in heavenly harmonies, that they may re-thunder from their high abodes.

North. We have a sister of Miss Paton's here, Cyril—Miss Eliza Paton, a charming creature—in years quite a schoolgirl, but in face and figure a lovely woman—who is every day singing more and more like an angel. Miss I. Paton, too, occasionally sojourns with us in Edinburgh—and I have heard no such profound and pathetic contralto as hers since the era of the glorious Grassini.

C. Cyril Thornton. A family of genius.

North. They are so indeed—and it is hereditary on both sides of the house. For the father is a man of original talents, and the mother quite a delight—of the most mild and modest

[1] This practice is still greatly overdone in the places of public entertainment in Edinburgh; and the nuisance ought certainly to be repressed.

[2] Afterwards Mrs Wood.

demeanour—prudent, sensible, and affectionate—and had her voice not mysteriously failed in her youth, I know not but she would have been the finest singer of them all.

Shepherd. I never thocht muckle o' the Piawno till I heard Miss Yaniewicz. What fingering is yon! Like a shower o' dancing sunbeams! What's in general ca'd execution 's a desperate clatter o' keys. But that young leddy makes the ivory silver-sweet as the musical-glasses, or it crashes to her hauns like the pealing organ in a cathedral.

Tickler. I fear, Colonel, since you lost your arm, that you are no longer a sportsman.

C. Cyril Thornton. I have given up shooting, although Joe Manton constructed a light piece for me, with which I generally contrived to hit and miss time about; but I am a devout disciple of Izaak, and was grievously disappointed on my arrival t'other day in Kelso, to find another occupier in Walton-hall; but my friend, Mr Alexander Ballantyne, and I, proceed to Peebles on the 1st of June, to decide our bet of a rump and dozen, he with the spinning minnow, and I with Phin's delight.

Shepherd. Watty Ritchie 'll beat you baith with the Mayflee, if it be on, or ony length aneath the stanes.

North. You will be all sorry to hear that our worthy friend Watty is laid up with a bad rheumatism, and can no longer fish the Megget Water and the lochs, and return to Peebles in the same day.

Shepherd. That's what a' your waders comes to at last. Had it no been, Mr North, for your plowterin in a' the rivers and lochs o' Scotland, baith saut water and fresh, like a Newfoundland dog, or rather a seal or an otter, you needna had that crutch aneath your oxter. Cornnall Cyril, saw ye him ever a-fishin?

C. Cyril Thornton. Never but once, for want of better ground, in the Crinan Canal, out of a coal-barge, for braises, when I was a red-gowned student at Glasgow.

Shepherd. Oh! but you should hae seen him in Loch Owe, or the Spey. In he used to gang, out, out, and ever sae far out frae the pint o' a promontory, sinkin aye furder and furder doun, first to the waistband o' his breeks, then up to the middle button o' his waistcoat, then to the verra breast, then to the oxters, then to the neck, and then to the verra chin o'

him, sae that you wunnered how he could fling the flee, till last o' a' he would plump richt out o' sight, till the Highlander on Ben Cruachan thocht him drooned; but he wasna born to be drooned—no he, indeed—sae he taks to the soomin, and strikes awa wi' ae arm, like yoursel, sir—for the tither had haud o' the rod—and, could ye believ't, though it's as true as Scriptur, fishing a' the time, that no a moment o' the cloudy day micht be lost; ettles at an island a quarter o' a mile aff, wi' trees, and an old ruin o' a religious house, wherein beads used to be coonted, and wafers eaten, and mass muttered hundreds o' years ago; and gettin footin on the yellow sand or the green sward, he but gies himsel a shake, and ere the sun looks out o' the clud, has hyucket a four-pounder, whom in four minutes (for it's a multiplying pirn the cretur uses), he lands gasping through the giant gills, and glitterin wi' a thousan' spots, streaks, and stars, on the shore. That's a pictur o' North's fishing in days o' yore.[1] But look at him noo—only look at him noo—wi' that auld-farrant face o' his, no unlike a pike's, crunkled up in his chair, his chin no that unwullin to tak a rest on his collar-bane—the hauns o' him a' covered wi' chalk-stanes—his legs like winnle-straes—and his knees but knobbs, sae that he canna cross the room, far less soom ower Loch Owe, without a crutch; and wunna you join wi' me, Cornnall Cyril, in hauding up baith your hauns—I aux your pardon, in hauding up your richt haun—and comparing the past wi' the present, exclaim, amaist sobbin, and in tears, "Vanity o' vanities! all is vanity!"

North (*suddenly hitting the Shepherd over the sconce with his crutch*). Take that, blasphemer!

Shepherd (*clawing his pow*). "Man of age, thou smitest sore!"

C. Cyril Thornton. Mr Hogg, North excels at the crutch-exercise.

Shepherd. Put your finger, Cornnall, on here—did you ever fin' sic a big clour risen in sae wee a time?

C. Cyril Thornton. Never. Mr North with his crutch, had he lived in the Sylvan Age of Robbery, would have been a match for the best of the merry Outlaws of Sherwood. Little

[1] Professor Wilson's mode of angling in his younger days is here painted to the life. Even so late as 1849 he was in the habit of wading up to the loins in the practice of his favourite pastime.

John would have sung small, and Robin Hood fancied him no more than he did the Pinder of Wakefield.

Shepherd. That's what's ca'd at Buchanan Lodge cracking a practical joke, Cormall. I maun get Peter to bring me some brown paper steep'd in vinegar, or the clour 'll be like a horn. I scarcely think, even already, that my hat would stay on. O sir, but you're desperate cruel.

North. Not I, my dear James. I knew I had a man to deal with; the tenth part of such a touch would have killed a Cockney.

Shepherd. The table's unco coggly; and if a body happens to fill their tumbler to the brim, the toddy fa's ower, and jaups it a', makin the mahogany nasty sticky.

North. One of the feet is too short; but it is a difficult thing to get a book exactly of the right size to steady it. Tom Dibdin is making the attempt now—but without any benefit.

Tickler. Boaden?

North. Too heavy. Peter uses him instead of the lead for the front door.

Tickler. Shall we try Reynolds?

North. Too light.

Tickler. Old O'Keefe?

North. He would do better, but is now too much battered.

Tickler. The Margravine of Anspach?

North. I am using her at present for the door of my bedroom, to keep it from flying to in this hot weather; and when the nights are cool, I take the old lady into bed with me, sliding her, when I get sleepy, under the bolster.

Shepherd. That's a bonny way o' using so mony o' Mr Cobrun's byucks. For my ain part, I like just excessively to read the lives o' playactors and playactresses, and everything in ony way connected with the stage.

Tickler. So do I, Hogg. There's Cibber, a delightful book. You are carried back by a single little unimportant fact to the Augustan age—such as Cibber's mentioning that the person sitting next him in the pit was—Mr Addison!

North. Reynolds is the liveliest of those modern Theatrical Autobiographers, and tells well some good stories. Dibdin is less so—but he seems to be, notwithstanding, a clever man, with his talents at all times at his finger ends; and what is better, an amiable and an honest man. I like Tom Dibdin

both on his own and his father's account. I never saw Tom, but his father I knew well; and although my friend Allan Cunningham and I differ in opinion on that point, he was, take good, bad, and indifferent together, the best sea-song writer that ever was chanted below or between decks of the British Navy.

Shepherd. What a bow-wowing's that, thinks ony o' you, out-by ?

North. Bronte baying at some blackguards on the outer side of the gate.

Shepherd. Oh! sir, I've heard tell o' your new Newfoundland dowg, and would like to see him. May I ring for Peter to lowse him frae his cheen, and bring him ben for me to look at ? [*Rings the bell*—PETER *receives his instructions.*

North. Bronte's mother, James, is a respectable female who now lives in Claremont Crescent; his father, who served his time in the navy, and was on board Admiral Otway's ship when he hoisted his flag in her on the Leith Station, is now resident, I believe, at Portobello. The couple have never had any serious quarrel; but, for reasons best known to themselves, choose to live apart. Bronte is at present the last of all his race—the heir-apparent of his parents' virtues—his four brothers and three sisters having all unfortunately perished at sea.

Shepherd. Did ye ever see onything grow sae fast as a Newfoundland whalp ? There's a manifest difference on them between breakfast and denner, and denner and sooper; and they keep growin a' nicht lang.

North. Bronte promises to stand three feet without his shoes——

Shepherd. I hear him comin—yowf-yowffin as he spangs along. I wush he mayna coup that weak-ham'd bodie, Peter.

[*Door opens, and* BRONTE[1] *bounces in.*

C. Cyril Thornton. A noble animal, indeed, and the very image of a dog that saved a drummer of ours, who chose to hop overboard, through fear of a floggin, in the Bay of Biscay.

North. What do you think of him, James ?

Shepherd. Think o' him? I canna think o' him—it's aneuch to see him—what'n a sagacious countenance. Look

[1] Bronte was a real character. His life and death are afterwards commemorated.

at him lauchin as he observes the empty punch-bowl. His back's preceesely on a line wi' the edge o' the table. And oh! but he's bonnily marked—a white ring roun' the neck o' him, a white breast, white paws, a white tip o' the tail, and a' the rest black as nicht. O man, but you're towsy! His legs, Mr North, canna be thinner than my airm, and what houghs, hips, and theeghs! I'm leanin a' my haill waght upon his back, and his spine bends nae mair than about the same as Captain Brown's chain-pier at Newhaven when a hundred folk are walking alang't, to gang on board the steamboat. His neck, too, 's like a bill's—if he was turnin o' a sudden at speed, a whap o' his tail would break a man's leg. Fecht! I'se warrant him fecht, either wi' ane o' his ain specie, or wi' cattle wi' cloven feet, or wi' the Lions Nero or Wallace o' Wummell's Menagerie, or wi' the Lord o' Creation, Man—by himsel Man! How he would rug them down —dowgs, or soos, or stirks, or lions, or rubbers! He could kill a man, I verily believe, without ever bitin him—just by dounin him wi' the waght o' his body and his paws, and then lying on the tap o' him, growlin to throttle and devour him if he mudged. He would do grandly for the Monks o' St Bernard to save travellers frae the snaw. Edwin Landseer maun come down to Scotland for anes errand, just to pent his pictur, that future ages may ken that in the reign o' George the Fourth, and durin the Queer Whig-and-Tory Administration, there was such a dowg.

North. I knew, James, that he was a dog after your own heart.

Shepherd. Oh, sir! dinna let onybody teach him tricks—sic as runnin back for a glove, or standin on his hurdies, or loupin out-ower a stick, or snappin bread frae aff his nose, or ringin the bell, or pickin out the letters o' the alphabet, like ane o' the working classes at a Mechanic Institution,—leave a' tricks o' that sort to Spaniels, and Poodles, and Puggies (I mean nae reflection on the Peebles Puggie withouten the tail, nor yet Mr Thomas Grieve's Peero), but respec' the soul that maun be in that noble, that glorious frame; and if you maun chain him, let him understand that sic restraint is no incompawtible wi' liberty; and as for his kennel, I would hae it sclated, and a porch ower the door, even a miniture imitation o' the porch o' Buchanan Lodge.

North. James, we shall bring him with us—along with the Gentles—to Altrive.

Shepherd. Proud wad I be to see him there, sir, and gran' soomin wad he get in St Mary's Loch, and the Loch o' the Lowes, and Loch Skene. But—there's just ae objection—ae objection—sir—I dinna see how I can get ower't.

North. The children, James? Why, he is as gentle as a new-dropt lamb.

Shepherd. Na, na — it's no the weans — for Jamie and his sisters would ride on his back — he could easy carry threeple—to Yarrow Kirk on the Sabbaths. But—but he would fecht with—The Bonassus.

North. The Bonassus! What mean ye, Shepherd?

Shepherd. I bocht the Bonassus frae the man that had him in a show; and Bronte and him would be for fechtin a duel, and baith o' them would be murdered, for neither Bronte nor the Bonassus would say "Hold, enough."

North. Of all the extraordinary freaks, my dear bard, that ever your poetical imagination was guilty of, next to writing the *Perils of Woman*, your purchase of the Bonassus seems to me the most miraculous.

Shepherd. I wanted to get a breed aff him wi' a maist extraordinar cow, that's half-blood to the loch-and-river kine by the bill's side—and I have nae doubt but that they wull be gran' milkers, and if fattened, will rin fifty score a quarter. But Bronte maunna come out to Altrive, sir, till the Bonassus is dead.

North. But is the monster manageable, James? Is there no danger of his rebelling against his master? Then, suppose he were to break through, or bound over the stone-wall and attack me, as I kept hobbling about the green braes, my doom would be sealed. I have stood many a tussle in my day, as you know and have heard, James; but I am not, now, single-handed, a match for the Bonassus.

Shepherd. The stane-wa's about my farm are rather rickly; but he never tries to break them doun as lang's the kye's wi' him,—nor do I think he has ony notion o' his ain strength. It's just as weel, for wi' yon head and shouthers he could ding doun a house.

C. Cyril Thornton. How the deuce, Mr Hogg, did you get

him from Edinburgh to Altrive? To look at him, he seemed an animal that would neither lead nor drive.

Shepherd. I bought him, sir, at Selkirk, waggon and a', and druv him hame mysel. The late owner tauked big aboot his fury and fairceness—and aiblins he was fairce in his keepin, as weel he micht be, fed on twa bushels o' ingans—unnions that is—per deeam—but as sune as I had him at Mount Benger, I backet the waggon a wee doun hill, flang open the end door, and out, like a debtor frae five years' confinement, lap the Bonassus——

Tickler. Was you on the top of the waggon, James?

Shepherd. No—that thocht had occurred to me,—but I was munted,—and the powney 's verra fleet, showin bluid,—and aff I set at the gallop——

Tickler. With the Bonassus after you——

Shepherd. Whisht, man, whisht. The poor beast was scarcely able to staun'! He had forgotten the use of his legs! Sae I went up to him, on futt withouten fear, and patted him a' ower. Sair frights some o' the folk frae Megget Water got, on first coming on him unawares, — and I'm telt that there's a bairn ower-by about the side of Moffat Water—it's a callant—whose mither swarfed at the Bonassus, when she was near the doun-lying, that has a fearsome likeness till him in the face; but noo he's weel kent, and, I may say, liked and respeckit through a' the Forest, as a peaceable and industrious member o' society.

North. I dread, my dear James, that, independent of the Bonassus, it will not be possible for me to be up with you before autumn. I believe that I must make a trip to London im——

Shepherd. Ay, ay,—the truth's out noo. The rumour in the Forest was, that you had been sent for by the King a month sin' syne, but wadna gang,—and that a sheriff's offisher had been despatched in a chaise-and-four frae Lunnon, to bring you up by the cuff o' the neck, and gin you made ony resistance at the Lodge, to present his pistol.

North. There are certain secrets, my dearest James, the development of which, perhaps, lies beyond even the privileges of friendship. With you I have no reserve—but when Majesty——

Shepherd. Lays its command on a loyal subject, you was gaun to say, he maun obey. That's no my doctrine. It's slavish-like. You did perfectly richt, sir; the haill Forest swore you did perfectly richt in refusin to stir a futt frae your ain fireside in a free kintra, like the auld kingdom o' Scotland. Had the King been leevin at Holyrood, it micht hae been different; but for a man o' your years to be harled through the snaw——

North. I insist that this sort of conversation, sir, stop—and that what has been now said—most unwarrantedly, remember, James—go no farther. Do not think, my dear Shepherd, that all that passes within the penetralia of the Royal breast, finds an echo in the rumours of the Forest. "But something too much of this."

Shepherd. Weel, weel, sir—weel, weel. But dinna look sae desperate angry. I canna thole to see a frown on your face, it works sic a dreadfu', I had maist said deeabolical change on the haill expression o' the faytures. Oh smile, sir! if you please—do, Mr North, sir, my dear freen, do just gie ae bit blink o' a smile at the corner o' your ee or mouth—ay, that'll do, Christopher—that'll do—Oh man, Kit, but you was fairce the noo just at naething ava, as folks generally is when they are at their faircest, for then their rampagin passion meets wi' nae impediment, and keeps feed, feed, feedin on itself, and its ain heart.

North. For his Majesty King George the Fourth, James, would I lay down my life. A better—a nobler King—never sat on the British throne.

Shepherd. Deevil the ane. I dinna like the thocht o' deein, but gin it cam to that, and that my life could save his life, the thocht would be like the sound o' a trumpet, and when I fell I should

"Look proudly to Heaven from the death-bed of Fame!"

North. Scotland was delighted wi' the Thane's elevation to the Peerage.[1]

Shepherd. What! Lord Fife's? She had reason to be sae; for there's no a nobler ane amang a' her nobles.

North. Not one.

[1] The British peerage, giving him a seat in the House of Lords.

Shepherd. Ae promise ye maun gie me, my dear sir, before ye gang to Lunnon, and that's no to gang into the Tunnel.

North. But Brunel, James, is one of my most particular friends, and if he asks me to accompany him, I do not know how I can refuse.

Shepherd. That's the head engineer? Just tell him at ance that I hae extorted an oath, made you swear ower the dregs o' a jug o' toddy and a bowl o' punch, the Baltic and the Leviathan, that nae power on earth, short o' a Pulley or a Steam-engine, shall induce, or seduce you into the Tunnel.

North. I swear.

Shepherd. Noo, I'm easy. A tunnel, indeed, aneath the Thames! If there's no briggs anew, canna they bigg mair o' them? Nae tunnels, nor funnels—for I kenna which you ca' them—aneath rivers for me! It's no verra pleasant passin even under an aqueduck. But, Lord preserve us! think o' a street a' roarin wi' passengers, and lighted wi' lamp-posts, half a mile lang, and after a' but a Tunnel!

North. Yet I hope Brunel, a man of true genius, may yet overcome all difficulties.

Shepherd. Never, no never—only think o' plastering the back, or rather the bottom o' the river Thames, wi' cley, to hinner the water frae oozing through the roof o' the Tunnel!

North. It does indeed seem a slight application for a hopeless disease.

Shepherd. Thank God, sir, you wasna in the Tunnel that day! In twal minutes fu' to the verra mouth o' the shaft! You never could hae made your escape, gran' soomer as you ance was; and what signifies soomin when the risin waters jam you up to the ceilin—or when twenty out o' a hunder Irish labourers grup haud o' your legs? There maun hae been fine helter-skelterin that day—but niest time the Thames pays a visit to his ain Tunnel, he mayna be so slaw, nor yet so sober—but send a' the four hunder men wi' their spades, and shovels, and pickaxes, and gavelocks, and barrows, haund and horrel'd, and a' the sheds, and scaffoldin, and machinery, steam-engines and a', to destruction in ae single squash. But whisht—there's thunner!

Tickler. Only Mr Ambrose with the coach I ordered to be at the Lodge precisely at one.

Shepherd. I'm sorry she's come. For I was just beginnin to summon up courage to hint the possibility, if no the propriety, o' anither bowl—or at least a jug.

C. Cyril Thornton (*rising*). God bless you, sir, good morning—Mr Ambrose may call it but one o'clock, if it gives him any pleasure to think that the stream of time may run counter to the Moon and Stars; but it is nearer three, and I trust the lamps are not lighted needlessly to affront the dawn. Once more—God bless you, sir. Good morning.

North. Thursday at six, Cyril—farewell.

[*Enter* Mr Ambrose *to announce the coach.*

Shepherd. Gude-by, sir—dinna get up aff your chair. (*Aside*) Cornnall, he canna rise. The coach 'll drap the Cornnall at Awmrose's in Picardy, and me at the Peebles Arms, Sign o' the Sawmon, Candlemaker Row,—and Mr Tickler at his ain house, Southside—and by then it'll be about time for't to return to the stance in George Street.

C. Cyril Thornton (*opening the window-shutters at a nod from* North). The blaze of day.

[*Coach drives from the Lodge, ribbons and rod in the hand of* Mr Ambrose.

END OF VOL. I.

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